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A

MANUAL FOR SPONSORS.

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BY

REV. ALBERT D. TRAVER, A. M.,

RECTOR OF ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, POUGHKEEPSIE.

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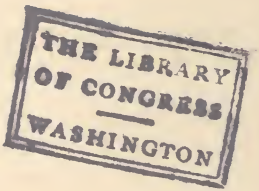

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TO THE

Members of the Protestant Episcopal Church,

IN

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

THE PRESENT MANUAL

IS (WITHOUT FURTHER PREFACE) DEDICATED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings, with Thy most gracious favour, and further us with Thy continual help; that, in all our works begun, continued and ended in Thee, we may glorify Thy Holy Name; and finally, by Thy mercy, obtain everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Regard, O Lord, the supplications of Thy servants, and grant that whosoever shall be dedicated to Thee *** by Baptism, may be sanctified by the Holy Ghost, delivered from wrath and eternal death, and received as a living member of Christ's Church, and may ever remain in the number of Thy faithful children.

Grant, O Lord, that they who *** shall in their own persons renew the promises and vows which they made, or which were made for them by their Sureties at their Baptism, and thereupon shall be confirmed by the Bishop, may receive such a measure of Thy Holy Spirit that they may be enabled faithfully to fulfil the same, and grow in grace unto their lives' end.

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THE MINISTRATION

OF

Public Baptism of Infants,

TO BE USED IN THE CHURCH.

¶ The people are to be admonished, that it is most convenient that Baptism should not be administered but upon Sundays and other Holy days, or Prayer days. Nevertheless (if necessity so require) Baptism may be administered upon any other day.

¶ There shall be for every Male child to be baptized, when they can be had, two Godfathers and one Godmother; and for every Female, one Godfather and two Godmothers; and Parents shall be admitted as Sponsors, if it be desired.

¶ When there are children to be baptized, the parents or sponsors shall give knowledge thereof, before the beginning of Morning Prayer, to the Minister. And then the Godfathers and Godmothers, and the people with the children, must be ready at the Font, either immediately after the last Lesson at Morning Prayer, or else immediately after the last Lesson at Evening Prayer, as the Minister, by his discretion, shall appoint. And the Minister coming to the Font (which is then to be filled with pure water) and standing there, shall say,

Hath this child been already baptized, or no?

¶ If they answer, *No;* then shall the Minister proceed, as followeth.

Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin; and our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous mercy, he will grant to *this child* that which by nature *he* cannot have; that *he* may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy Church, and be made *a* living *member* of the same.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy, didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water;

and also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy Baptism; and by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son JESUS CHRIST in the river Jordan, didst sanctify water, to the mystical washing away of sin; we beseech thee, for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt mercifully look upon *this child;* wash *him*, and sanctify *him* with the HOLY GHOST; that *he*, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of CHRIST'S Church; and being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally *he* may come to the land of everlasting life; there to reign with thee, world without end, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Or this.

ALMIGHTY and immortal God, the aid of all who need, the helper of all who flee to thee for succour, the life of those who believe, and the resurrection of the dead; we call upon thee for *this infant*, that *he*, coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of sin, by spiritual regeneration. Receive *him*, O LORD, as thou hatt promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, Ask, and ye shall have; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: So give now unto us who ask; let us who seek, find; open the gate unto us who knock; that *this infant* may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then the Minister shall say as follows: or else shall pass on to the questions addressed to the Sponsors; and from thence to the Prayer immediately before the immersion, or the pouring of water on the infant. But note; that, in every church, the intermediate parts of the Service shall be used, once at least in every month (if there be a baptism) for the better instructing of the people in the grounds of Infant Baptism.

Hear the words of the Gospel, written by St. Mark, in the tenth chapter, at the thirteenth verse.

THEY brought young children to CHRIST that he should touch

them; and his disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when JESUS saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of GOD. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of GOD as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

¶ After the Gospel is read, the Minister shall make this brief Exhortation upon the words of the Gospel:

BELOVED, ye hear in this Gospel the words of our Saviour CHRIST, that he commanded the children to be brought unto him; how he blamed those who would have kept them from him; how he exhorteth all men to follow their innocency. Ye perceive how, by his outward gesture and deed, he declared his good will toward them: for he embraced them in his arms, he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them. Doubt ye not therefore, but earnestly believe, that he will likewise favourably receive *this* present *infant;* that he will embrace *him* with the arms of his mercy; and that he will give unto *him* the blessings of eternal life, and make *him partaker* of his everlasting kingdom. Wherefore, we being thus persuaded of the good will of our heavenly Father toward *this infant,* declared by his Son JESUS CHRIST; and nothing doubting, but that he favourably alloweth this charitable work of ours, in bringing *this infant* to this holy baptism; let us faithfully and devoutly give thanks unto him, and say,

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, heavenly Father, we give thee humble thanks, that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace, and faith in thee: increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy HOLY SPIRIT to *this infant;* that *he* may be born again, and be made *an heir* of everlasting salvation, through our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the HOLY SPIRIT, now and for ever. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister speak unto the Godfathers and Godmothers on this wise:

Dearly beloved, ye have brought *this child* here to be baptized; ye have prayed that our Lord Jesus Christ would vouchsafe to receive *him*, to release *him* from sin, to sanctify *him* with the Holy Ghost, to give *him* the kingdom of heaven and everlasting life. Ye have heard also that our Lord Jesus Christ hath promised, in his Gospel, to grant all these things that ye have prayed for; which promise, he for his part will most surely keep and perform. Wherefore, after this promise made by Christ, *this infant* must also faithfully, for *his* part, promise by you that are *his* sureties (until *he* come of age to take it upon *himself*) that *he* will renounce the devil and all his works, and constantly believe God's holy word, and obediently keep his commandments.

¶ The Minister shall then demand of the Sponsors as follows; the questions being considered as addressed to them severally, and the answers to be made accordingly.

I demand therefore,

Dost thou, in the name of *this child*, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh; so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?

Answer. I renounce them all; and, by God's help, will endeavour not to follow, nor be led by them.

Minister. Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian faith, as contained in the Apostles' Creed?

Answer. I do.

Minister. Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

Answer. That is my desire.

Minister. Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Answer. I will, by God's help.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

O MERCIFUL GOD, grant that the old Adam in *this child* may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in *him*. *Amen.*

Grant that all sinful affections may die in *him*, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in *him*. *Amen.*

Grant that *he* may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph against the devil, the world, and the flesh. *Amen.*

Grant that whosoever is here dedicated to thee by our office and ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded, through thy mercy, O blessed LORD GOD, who dost live and govern all things, world without end. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY, everliving GOD, whose most dearly beloved Son JESUS CHRIST, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of his most precious side both water and blood; and gave commandment to his disciples, that they should go teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST; regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that *this child*, now to be baptized therein, may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful children; through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then the Minister shall take the child into his hands, and shall say to the Godfathers and Godmothers,

Name this child.

¶ And then, naming it after them, he shall dip it in the water discreetly, or shall pour water upon it, saying,

N. I BAPTIZE thee in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen.

¶ Then the Minister shall say,

WE receive *this child* into the congregation of CHRIST'S Flock,

and do * sign *him* with the sign of the cross; in token that hereafter *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of CHRIST crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue CHRIST'S faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end. Amen.

* *Here the Minister shall make a cross upon the child's forehead.*

¶ If those who present the infant shall desire the sign of the cross to be omitted, although the Church knows no worthy cause of scruple concerning the same, yet, in that case, the Minister may omit that part of the above which follows the immersion, or the pouring of water on the infant.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

SEEING now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this child* is regenerate, and grafted into the body of CHRIST'S Church; let us give thanks unto ALMIGHTY GOD for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that *this child* may lead the rest of *his* life according to this beginning.

¶ Then shall be said, all kneeling,

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

WE yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this infant* with thy holy Spirit, to receive *him* for thine own *child* by adoption, and to incorporate *him* into thy holy Church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant, that *he*, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with CHRIST in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that as *he is* made *partaker* of the death of thy Son, *he* may also be *partaker* of his resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of thy holy Church, *he* may be *an inheritor* of thine everlasting kingdom; through CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then, all standing up, the Minister shall say to the Godfathers and Godmothers this Exhortation following:

Forasmuch as *this child hath* promised by you *his* sureties, to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; ye must remember, that it is your parts and duties to see that *this infant* be taught, so soon as *he* shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, *he hath* here made by you. And that *he* may know these things the better, ye shall call upon *him* to hear sermons; and chiefly ye shall provide, that *he* may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that *this child* may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life: remembering always, that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.

¶ Then shall he add, and say,

Ye are to take care that *this child* be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as *he* can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and *is* sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose.

THE MINISTRATION

OF

Private Baptism of Children,

IN HOUSES.

¶ The Minister of every Parish shall often admonish the People, that they defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth, or other Holy day falling between, unless upon a great and reasonable cause.

¶ And also they shall warn them, that, without like great cause and necessity, they procure not their children to be baptized at home in their houses. But when need shall compel them so to do, then baptism shall be administered as followeth.

¶ First, let the Minister of the Parish (or, in his absence, any other lawful Minister that can be procured) with those who are present, call upon God, and say the Lord's Prayer, and so many of the Collects appointed to be said before in the Form of Public Baptism, as the time and present exigence will suffer. And then, the child being named by some one who is present, the Minister shall pour water upon it, saying these words:

N. I BAPTIZE thee in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen.

¶ Then the Minister shall give thanks unto God, and say,

WE yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this infant* with thy holy Spirit, to receive *him* for thine own *child* by adoption, and to incorporate *him* into thy holy Church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant, that *he*, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with CHRIST in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that as *he is* made *partaker* of the death of thy Son, *he* may also be *partaker* of his resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of thy holy Church, *he* may be *an inheritor* of thine everlasting kingdom, through CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ And let them not doubt, but that the child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized, and ought not to be baptized again. Yet nevertheless, if the child which is after this sort baptized do afterward live;

it is expedient that it be brought into the church, to the intent that if the Minister of the same Parish did himself baptize that child, the Congregation may be certified of the true form of Baptism, by him privately before used: in which case he shall say thus:

I CERTIFY you, that according to the due and prescribed Order of the Church, *at such a time* and *at such a place*, before divers witnesses, I baptized *this child*.

¶ But if the child were baptized by any other lawful Minister, then the Minister of the Parish where the child was born or christened, shall examine whether the same hath been lawfully done. And if the Minister shall find, by the answers of such as bring the child, that all things were done as they ought to be; then shall not he christen the child again, but shall receive him as one of the flock of true Christian People, saying thus:

I CERTIFY you, that in this case all is well done, and according unto due order, concerning the baptizing of *this child;* who is now by baptism incorporated into the Christian Church: For our Lord JESUS CHRIST doth not deny his grace and mercy unto such infants; but most lovingly doth call them unto him, as the holy Gospel doth witness to our comfort on this wise.

¶ Then the Minister shall say as follows: or else shall pass on to the Questions addressed to the Sponsors.

Hear the words of the Gospel, written by St. Mark, in the tenth chapter, at the thirteenth verse.

THEY brought young children to CHRIST, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those who brought them. But when JESUS saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of GOD. Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of GOD as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

¶ After the Gospel is read, the Minister shall make this brief Exhortation upon the words of the Gospel:

BELOVED, ye hear in this Gospel the words of our Saviour CHRIST, that he commanded the children to be brought unto him; how he blamed those that would have kept them from

him; how he exhorteth all men to follow their innocency. Ye perceive how, by his outward gesture and deed, he declared his good will toward them: for he embraced them in his arms, he laid his hands upon them, and blessed them. Doubt ye not therefore, but earnestly believe, that he hath likewise favourably received *this* present *infant;* that he hath embraced *him* with the arms of his mercy; and, as he hath promised in his holy word, will give unto *him* the blessing of eternal life, and make *him partaker* of his everlasting kingdom. Wherefore, we being thus persuaded of the good will of our heavenly Father, declared by his Son JESUS CHRIST, toward *this infant*, let us faithfully and devoutly give thanks unto him, and say the prayer which the LORD himself taught us.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister demand the name of the child; which being by the Godfathers and Godmothers pronounced, the Minister shall say as follows:

DOST thou, in the name of *this child*, renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh; so that thou wilt not follow, nor be led by them?

Answer. I renounce them all; and, by GOD'S help, will endeavour not to follow, nor be led by them.

Minister. Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian faith, as contained in the Apostles' Creed?

Answer. I do.

Minister. Wilt thou then obediently keep GOD'S holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Answer. I will, by GOD'S help.

¶ Then the Minister shall say,

WE receive *this child* into the Congregation of CHRIST's Flock, and do * sign *him* with the sign of the cross; in token that hereafter *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of CHRIST crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue CHRIST's faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end. Amen.

* *Here the Minister shall make a cross upon the child's forehead.*

¶ The same rule is to be observed here, as to the omission of the sign of the cross, as in the Public Baptism of Infants.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

SEEING now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this child* is regenerate, and grafted into the body of CHRIST's Church; let us give thanks unto ALMIGHTY GOD for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that *this child* may lead the rest of *his* life according to this beginning.

¶ Then shall be said, all kneeling,

WE yield thee hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased thee to regenerate *this infant* with thy holy Spirit, to *receive him* for thine own *child* by adoption, and to incorporate *him* into thy holy Church. And humbly we beseech thee to grant, that *he* being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with CHRIST in his death, may crucify the old man, and utterly abolish the whole body of sin; and that as *he is* made *partaker* of the death of thy Son, *he* may also be *partaker* of his resurrection; so that finally, with the residue of thy holy Church, *he* may be *an inheritor* of thine everlasting kingdom, through CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then, all standing up, the Minister shall say to the Godfathers and Godmothers this Exhortation following:

FORASMUCH as *this child hath* promised by you, *his* sureties, to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in GOD, and to serve him; ye must remember, that it is your parts and duties

to see that *this infant* be taught, so soon as *he* shall be able to learn, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession *he hath* here made by you. And that *he* may know these things the better, ye shall call upon *him* to hear sermons; and chiefly ye shall provide, that *he* may learn the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health; and that *this child* may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life: remembering always, that baptism doth represent unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour CHRIST, and to be made like unto him; that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.

¶ Then shall he add, and say,

YE are to take care that *this child* be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as *he* can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and is sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church Catechism, set forth for that purpose.

¶ But if they who bring the infant to the church do make such uncertain answers to the Minister's questions, as that it cannot appear that the child was baptized with Water, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost (which are essential parts of Baptism) then let the Minister baptize it in the Form before appointed for Public Baptism of Infants: saying, that, at the dipping of the child in the Font, he shall use this form of words:

IF thou art not already baptized, *N.* I baptize thee in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen.

¶ If Infant Baptism, and the receiving of Infants baptized in private, are to be at the same time, the Minister may make the Questions to the Sponsors and the succeeding prayers serve for both. And again, after the Immersion, or the pouring of water, and the receiving into the Church, the Minister may use the remainder of the Service for both.

THE MINISTRATION

OF

Baptism to such as are of Riper Years,

AND ABLE TO ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES.

¶ When any such persons as are of Riper years are to be baptized, timely notice shall be given to the Minister; that so due care may be taken for their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion; and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves, with prayers and fasting, for the receiving of this holy Sacrament.

¶ And if they shall be found fit, then the Godfathers and Godmothers (the people being assembled upon the Sunday, Holy day, or Prayer day, appointed) shall be ready to present them at the Font, immediately after the Second Lesson, either at Morning or Evening Prayer, as the Minister, in his discretion, shall think fit.

¶ And standing there, the Minister shall ask, Whether any of the persons here presented be baptized or no? If they shall answer, No; then shall the Minister say thus:

Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, (and that which is born of the flesh is flesh,) and they who are in the flesh cannot please God, but live in sin, committing many actual transgressions; and our Saviour Christ saith, None can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost; I beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness, he will grant to *these persons* that which by nature *they* cannot have; that *they* may be baptized with water and the Holy Ghost, and received into Christ's holy Church, and be made *lively members* of the same.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God, who of thy great mercy, didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water;

and also didst safely lead the children of Israel thy people through the Red Sea, figuring thereby thy holy Baptism; and by the baptism of thy well-beloved Son JESUS CHRIST in the river Jordan, didst sanctify the element of water, to the mystical washing away of sin; we beseech thee, for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt mercifully look upon *these* thy *servants;* wash *them* and sanctify *them* with the HOLY GHOST; that *they,* being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of CHRIST's Church; and being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, may so pass the waves of this troublesome world, that finally *they* may come to the land of everlasting life; there to reign with thee, world without end; through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Or this.

ALMIGHTY and immortal GOD, the aid of all who need, the helper of all who flee to thee for succour, the life of those who believe, and the resurrection of the dead; we call upon thee for *these persons,* that *they,* coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of *their* sins, by spiritual regeneration. Receive *them,* O LORD, as thou hast promised by thy well-beloved Son, saying, Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: So give now unto us who ask; let us who seek, find; open the gate unto us who knock; that *these persons* may enjoy the everlasting benediction of thy heavenly washing, and may come to the eternal kingdom which thou hast promised by CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then the Minister shall say,

Hear the words of the Gospel, written by Saint John, in the third chapter, beginning at the first verse:

THERE was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from GOD; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except

God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof; but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

¶ After which he shall say this Exhortation following:

Beloved, ye hear in this Gospel the express words of our Saviour Christ, that, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Whereby ye may perceive the great necessity of this Sacrament, where it may be had. Likewise, immediately before his ascension into heaven, (as we read in the last chapter of Saint Mark's Gospel,) he gave command to his disciples, saying, Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned: which also showeth unto us the great benefit we reap thereby. For which cause Saint Peter the Apostle, when upon his first preaching of the Gospel many were pricked at the heart, and said to him and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? replied, and said unto them, Repent and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost: For the promise is to you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words exhorted he them, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. For, as the same apostle

testifieth in another place, even baptism doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward GOD,) by the resurrection of JESUS CHRIST. Doubt ye not therefore, but earnestly believe, that he will favourably receive *these* present *persons*, truly repenting, and coming unto him by faith; that he will grant *them* remission of *their* sins, and bestow upon *them* the HOLY GHOST; that he will give *them* the blessing of eternal life, and make *them partakers* of his everlasting kingdom.

Wherefore, we being thus persuaded of the good will of our heavenly Father toward *these persons*, declared by his Son JESUS CHRIST, let us faithfully and devoutly give thanks to him, and say,

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, heavenly Father, we give thee humble thanks, for that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace, and faith in thee: increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy HOLY SPIRIT to *these persons*, that *they* may be born again, and be made *heirs* of everlasting salvation, through our Lord JESUS CHRIST, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the HOLY SPIRIT, now and for ever. Amen.

¶ Then the Minister shall speak to the persons to be baptized on this wise:

WELL-BELOVED, who are come hither desiring to receive holy Baptism, *ye* have heard how the congregation hath prayed, that our Lord JESUS CHRIST would vouchsafe to receive you and bless you, to release you of your sins, to give you the kingdom of heaven, and everlasting life. *Ye* have heard also that our Lord JESUS CHRIST hath promised, in his holy word, to grant all those things that ye have prayed for; which promise he, for his part, will most surely keep and perform. Wherefore, after this promise made by CHRIST, *ye* must also faithfully, for your part, in the presence of these your witnesses, and this whole congregation, promise and answer to the following questions.

¶ The Minister shall then demand of the persons to be baptized as follows; the questions being considered as addressed to them severally, and the answers to be made accordingly.

Question.

Dost thou renounce the devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, with all covetous desires of the same, and the sinful desires of the flesh; so that thou wilt not follow nor be led by them?

Answer. I renounce them all; and, by God's help, will endeavour not to follow, nor be led by them.

Question. Dost thou believe all the articles of the Christian faith, as contained in the Apostles' Creed?

Answer. I do.

Question. Wilt thou be baptized in this faith?

Answer. That is my desire.

Question. Wilt thou then obediently keep God's holy will and commandments; and walk in the same all the days of thy life?

Answer. I will, by God's help.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

O merciful God, grant that the old Adam in *these persons* may be so buried, that the new man may be raised up in *them*. *Amen.*

Grant that all sinful affections may die in *them*, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in *them*. *Amen.*

Grant that *they* may have power and strength to have victory, and to triumph, against the devil, the world, and the flesh. *Amen.*

Grant that *they* being here dedicated to thee by our office and ministry, may also be endued with heavenly virtues, and everlastingly rewarded, through thy mercy, O blessed Lord God, who dost live and govern all things, world without end. *Amen.*

Almighty, everliving God, whose most dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, did shed out of his

most precious side both water and blood; and gave commandment to his disciples, that they should go teach all nations, and baptize them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST; regard, we beseech thee, the supplications of thy congregation; sanctify this water to the mystical washing away of sin; and grant that the *persons* now to be baptized therein may receive the fulness of thy grace, and ever remain in the number of thy faithful children, through JESUS CHRIST our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Then shall the Minister take each person to be baptized by the right hand; and placing him conveniently by the Font according to his discretion, shall ask the Godfathers and Godmothers the name; and then shall dip him in the water, or pour water upon him, saying,

N. I BAPTIZE thee in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

WE receive *this person* into the congregation of CHRIST'S Flock, and do * sign *him* with the sign of the cross; in token that hereafter *he* shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of CHRIST crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner, against sin, the world, and the devil; and to continue CHRIST'S faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end. Amen.

* *Here the Minister shall make a cross upon the person's forehead.*

¶ The same rule, as to the omission of the sign of the cross, is to be observed here, as in the Baptism of Infants.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

SEEING now, dearly beloved brethren, that *these persons are* regenerate, and grafted into the body of CHRIST'S Church; let us give thanks unto ALMIGHTY GOD for these benefits, and with one accord make our prayers unto him, that *they* may lead the rest of *their* life according to this beginning.

¶ Then shall be said the Lord's Prayer, all kneeling.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven;

Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

We yield thee humble thanks, O heavenly Father, that thou hast vouchsafed to call us to the knowledge of thy grace, and faith in thee: increase this knowledge, and confirm this faith in us evermore. Give thy holy Spirit to *these persons;* that being now born again, and made *heirs* of everlasting salvation, through our Lord Jesus Christ, *they* may continue thy *servants*, and attain thy promises, through the same Lord Jesus Christ thy Son; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, everlastingly. *Amen.*

¶ Then, all standing up, the Minister shall use this Exhortation following: speaking to the Godfathers and Godmothers first.

Forasmuch as *these persons have* promised, in your presence, to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God, and to serve him; ye must remember that it is your part and duty to put *them* in mind, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, *they have* now made before this congregation, and especially before you *their* chosen witnesses. And ye are also to call upon *them* to use all diligence to be rightly instructed in God's holy word; that so *they* may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and live godly, righteously, and soberly, in this present world.

¶ And then speaking to the baptized persons, he shall proceed and say,

And as for you, who have now by baptism put on Christ, it is your part and duty also, being made the *children* of God and of the light, by faith in Jesus Christ, to walk answerably to your Christian calling, and as becometh the children of light; remembering always, that Baptism representeth unto us our profession; which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto him; that as he died, and rose again for us, so should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and

rise again unto righteousness; continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections, and daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living.

¶ It is expedient that every person thus baptized should be confirmed by the Bishop, so soon after his Baptism as conveniently may be; that so he may be admitted to the Holy Communion.

¶ Whereas necessity may require the baptizing of adults in private houses, in consideration of extreme sickness; the same is hereby allowed in that case. And a convenient number of persons shall be assembled in the house where the Sacrament is to be performed. And in the exhortation, *Well-beloved*, &c., instead of these words, *come hither desiring*, shall be inserted this word, *desirous*.

¶ If there be occasion for the Office of Infant Baptism and that of Adults at the same time, the Minister shall use the exhortation and one of the prayers next following in the Office for Adults; only, in the exhortation and prayer, after the words, *these persons*, and *these thy servants*, adding, *and these infants*. Then the Minister shall proceed to the questions to be demanded in the cases respectively. After the immersion, or the pouring of water, the prayer shall be as in this service; only, after the words, *these persons*, shall be added, *and these infants*. After which the remaining part of each service shall be used; first that for Adults, and lastly that for Infants.

¶ If any person, not baptized in their infancy, shall be brought to be baptized before they come to years of discretion to answer for themselves, it may suffice to use the Office for Public Baptism of Infants; or, in case of extreme danger, the Office for Private Baptism; only changing the word *infant*, for *child*, or *person*, as occasion requireth.

A Catechism;

THAT IS TO SAY,

AN *INSTRUCTION*, TO BE LEARNED BY EVERY PERSON BEFORE HE BE BROUGHT TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE BISHOP.

Question.

1. WHAT is your name?

Ans. *N.* or *M.*

2. *Quest.* Who gave you this name?

Ans. My Sponsors in Baptism; wherein I was made a member of CHRIST, the child of GOD, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven.

3. *Quest.* What did your Sponsors then for you?

Ans. They did promise and vow three things in my name: First, that I should renounce the devil and all his works, the pomps and vanity of this wicked world, and all the sinful lusts of the flesh; Secondly, that I should believe all the articles of the Christian faith; And Thirdly, that I should keep GOD'S holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of my life.

4. *Quest.* Dost thou not think that thou art bound to believe, and to do, as they have promised for thee?

Ans. Yes, verily; and by GOD'S help so I will: and I heartily thank our heavenly Father, that he hath called me to this state of salvation, through JESUS CHRIST our Saviour: and I pray unto GOD to give me his grace, that I may continue in the same unto my life's end.

5. *Catechist.* Rehearse the articles of thy Belief.

Answer.

I BELIEVE in GOD the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:

And in JESUS CHRIST his only Son our Lord; Who was con-

ceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day he rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy catholic Church; The communion of saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

6. *Quest.* What dost thou chiefly learn in these articles of thy Belief?

Ans. First, I learn to believe in God the Father, who hath made me, and all the world.

Secondly, in God the Son, who hath redeemed me, and all mankind.

Thirdly, in God the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth me, and all the people of God.

7. *Quest.* You said that your sponsors did promise for you, that you should keep God's commandments. Tell me how many there are.

Ans. Ten.

8. *Quest.* Which are they?

Answer.

The same which God spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

I. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and

show mercy unto thousands in them that love me, and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy GOD in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy GOD. In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the seventh day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy GOD giveth thee

VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

9. *Quest.* What dost thou chiefly learn by these commandments?

Ans. I learn two things; my duty toward GOD, and my duty toward my neighbour.

10. *Quest.* What is thy duty toward GOD?

Ans. My duty toward GOD is, to believe in him; to fear him; and to love him with all my heart, with all my mind, with all my soul, and with all my strength; to worship him; to give him thanks; to put my whole trust in him; to call upon him; to honour his holy name and his word; and to serve him truly all the days of my life.

11. *Quest.* What is thy duty toward thy neighbour?

Ans. My duty toward my neighbour is, to love him as myself, and to do to all men as I would they should do unto me: to love, honour, and succour my father and mother: to honour and obey the civil authority: to submit myself to all my governors, teachers, spiritual pastors, and masters: to order myself lowly and reverently to all my betters: to hurt nobody by word or deed: to be true and just in all my dealings: to bear no malice nor hatred in my heart: to keep my hands from picking and stealing, and my tongue from evil speaking, lying, and slandering: to keep my body in temperance, soberness, and chastity: not to covet nor desire other men's goods; but to learn and labour truly to get mine own living, and to do my duty in that state of life unto which it shall please God to call me.

12. *Catechist.* My good child, know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God, and to serve him, without his special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for by diligent prayer. Let me hear, therefore, if thou canst say the Lord's Prayer.

Answer.

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

13. *Quest.* What desirest thou of God in this prayer?

Ans. I desire my Lord God, our heavenly Father, who is the giver of all goodness, to send his grace unto me and all people; that we may worship him, serve him, and obey him, as we ought to do: and I pray unto God, that he will send us all things that are needful both for our souls and bodies; and that he will be merciful unto us, and forgive us our sins; and that it will please him to save and defend us in all dangers both of soul and body; and that he will keep us from all sin and wick-

edness, and from our spiritual enemy, and from everlasting death: and this I trust he will do of his mercy and goodness, through our Lord JESUS CHRIST; and therefore I say, Amen: So be it.

Question.

14. How many Sacraments hath CHRIST ordained in his Church?

Ans. Two only, as generally necessary to salvation; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

15. *Quest.* What meanest thou by this word *Sacrament?*

Ans. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given unto us; ordained by CHRIST himself; as a means whereby we receive the same, and a pledge to assure us thereof.

16. *Quest.* How many parts are there in a Sacrament?

Ans. Two; the outward visible sign, and the inward spiritual grace.

17. *Quest.* What is the outward visible sign or form in Baptism?

Ans. Water; wherein the person is baptized, *In the name of the* FATHER, *and of the* SON, *and of the* HOLY GHOST.

18. *Quest.* What is the inward and spiritual grace?

Ans. A death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness: for being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace.

19. *Quest.* What is required of persons to be baptized?

Ans. Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of GOD made to them in that Sacrament.

20. *Quest.* Why then are infants baptized, when by reason of their tender age they cannot perform them?

Ans. Because they promise them both by their sureties; which promise, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform.

21. *Quest.* Why was the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?

Ans. For the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of CHRIST, and of the benefits which we receive thereby.

22. *Quest.* What is the outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper?

Ans. Bread and wine, which the LORD hath commanded to be received.

23. *Quest.* What is the inward part or thing signified?

Ans. The body and blood of CHRIST, which are spiritually taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper.

24. *Quest.* What are the benefits whereof we are partakers thereby?

Ans. The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of CHRIST, as our bodies are by the bread and wine.

25. *Quest.* What is required of those who come to the Lord's Supper?

Ans. To examine themselves, whether they repent them truly of their former sins, steadfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in GOD's mercy, through CHRIST, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men.

¶ The Minister of every parish shall diligently upon Sundays and Holy days, or on some other convenient occasions, openly in the church, instruct or examine so many children of his parish, sent unto him, as he shall think convenient, in some part of this Catechism.

¶ And all fathers, mothers, masters, and mistresses shall cause their children, servants, and apprentices, who have not learned their Catechism, to come to the church at the time appointed, and obediently to hear, and to be ordered by the Minister, until such time as they have learned all that is here appointed for them to learn.

¶ So soon as children are come to a competent age, and can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and can answer to the other questions of this short Catechism, they shall be brought to the Bishop.

¶ And whensoever the Bishop shall give knowledge for children to be brought unto him for their Confirmation, the Minister of every parish shall either bring, or send in writing, with his hand subscribed thereunto, the names of all such persons within his parish, as he shall think fit to be presented to the Bishop to be confirmed.

The Order of Confirmation,

OR, LAYING HANDS UPON THOSE WHO ARE BAPTIZED AND COME TO YEARS OF DISCRETION.

¶ Upon the day appointed, all that are to be then confirmed, being placed and standing in order before the Bishop; he, or some other Minister appointed by him, shall read this preface following:

To the end that Confirmation may be ministered to the more edifying of such as shall receive it, the Church hath thought good to order, that none shall be confirmed, but such as can say the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and can also answer to such other questions, as in the short Catechism are contained: which order is very convenient to be observed; to the end that children, being now come to the years of discretion, and having learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in baptism, may themselves, with their own mouth and consent, openly before the Church ratify and confirm the same; and also promise, that, by the grace of GOD, they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe such things as they, by their own confession, have assented unto.

¶ Then shall the Bishop say,

Do ye here, in the presence of GOD, and of this congregation, renew the solemn promise and vow that ye made, or that was made in your name, at your baptism; ratifying and confirming the same; and acknowledging yourselves bound to believe and to do all those things which ye then undertook, or your sponsors then undertook for you?

¶ And every one shall audibly answer,

I do.

Bishop.

OUR help is in the name of the LORD;

Ans. Who hath made heaven and earth.

Bishop. Blessed be the name of the LORD;
Ans. Henceforth, world without end.
Bishop. LORD, hear our prayer.
Ans. And let our cry come unto thee.
Bishop. Let us pray.

ALMIGHTY and everliving GOD, who hast vouchsafed to regenerate these thy servants by water and the HOLY GHOST, and hast given unto them forgiveness of all their sins; strengthen them, we beseech thee, O LORD, with the HOLY GHOST, the Comforter; and daily increase in them thy manifold gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and ghostly strength, the spirit of knowledge and true godliness; and fill them, O LORD, with the spirit of thy holy fear, now and for ever. *Amen.*

¶ Then all of them in order kneeling before the Bishop, he shall lay his hands upon the head of every one severally, saying,

DEFEND, O LORD, this thy child [*or, this thy servant*] with thy heavenly grace; that *he* may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy HOLY SPIRIT more and more, until *he* come unto thy everlasting kingdom. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Bishop say,

The LORD be with you.
Ans. And with thy spirit.

¶ All kneeling down, the Bishop shall add,

Let us pray.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; Give us this day our daily bread; And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil. Amen.

¶ And these Collects.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting GOD, who makest us both to will and to do those things which are good and acceptable unto thy

divine majesty; we make our humble supplications unto thee for these thy servants, upon whom, after the example of thy holy apostles, we have now laid our hands; to certify them, by this sign, of thy favour and gracious goodness toward them. Let thy Fatherly hand, we beseech thee, ever be over them: Let thy HOLY SPIRIT ever be with them: and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of thy word, that in the end they may obtain everlasting life, through our Lord JESUS CHRIST; who, with thee and the HOLY GHOST, liveth and reigneth ever one GOD, world without end. *Amen.*

O ALMIGHTY LORD, and everlasting GOD, vouchsafe, we beseech thee, to direct, sanctify, and govern, both our hearts and bodies, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments; that through thy most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul, through our Lord and Saviour JESUS CHRIST. *Amen.*

¶ Then the Bishop shall bless them, saying thus:

THE blessing of GOD ALMIGHTY, the FATHER, the SON, and the HOLY GHOST, be upon you, and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

¶ And there shall none be admitted to the Holy Communion, until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed.

INTRODUCTION.

In the Offices for the Ministration of Baptism, in the Catechism, and in The Order of Confirmation, certain persons are mentioned, and variously designated as Godfathers and Godmothers, Sponsors, Sureties, and Witnesses,—titles, which, from their very signification, imply some important relation to certain other parties with whom they are connected. Thus, as will hereafter appear, they are called "Sponsors, because, in Infant Baptism, they respond or answer for the baptized. They are Sureties, in virtue of the security given to the Church, that the baptized shall be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life. And, from the spiritual affinity here created, by which a responsibility almost parental is undertaken by the Sureties, in the future training of the baptized, the terms Godfather

and Godmother have taken their rise."* They are also called Witnesses, in the case of Adults, as witnessing their Baptism, and pledged to remind them of the steps now taken by them, as also of the duties following thereafter.

The relation thus implied is entered upon actually, at the ministration of Baptism ; and even a cursory examination of those parts of the Prayer Book in which it is presented to our notice, shows that this connection between the parties is most intimate ; that the duties springing therefrom are most important ; that, therefore, they should not be lightly assumed ; and that, being assumed, they should be faithfully performed : for, they respect the salvation of the children of God.

Whatsoever, in any way, affects this—whether to hinder, or promote and secure it—must necessarily interest all, who have their own and others' salvation at heart, and should receive their serious attention, and their earnest care. Especially should this be the feeling and practice of all who have, or may, become

* Staunton's Church Dictionary.

Sponsors. They should know their duty and do it, undertaking the same in the fear of God, Who will most certainly bring upon them an awful judgment, if they do not (at least aim to) meet their responsibility in this matter.

For the instruction, therefore, of all who are, or contemplate becoming, Sponsors, has the present Manual been prepared, in the hope that it may contribute to the removal of ignorance or neglect; encourage and excite to the faithful performance of what, on this head, the Church has seen fit to appoint and require, for the edification of Her children. With this object in view, accordingly, it is proposed now to notice at some length the whole subject of Sponsorial duties, whatsoever seems necessary to an elucidation of the history and design of the Sponsorial office being connected therewith.

And since, as has already been remarked in advance, the Sponsorial relation to the baptized begins with their Baptism, when—as we shall see hereafter—certain renunciations, vows and promises are made, and certain subsequent duties enjoined, the perform-

ance of which is to continue for a certain period of time, it may not be out of place to notice—also at some length—the subject of Baptism, including some account of its origin among the Jews, its adoption by our Lord, and its ministration in the Christian Church.

A Manual for Sponsors.

PART I.

I.—JEWISH BAPTISM.

1. When man fell, thus terminating the original and true covenant of works by his failing to continue in a compliance with its terms, the covenant of grace began, with the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head : a promise mercifully made in virtue and in anticipation of the Great Sacrifice, consummated upon the cross by Christ, Who was The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* For, assuredly, it was an act of God's merciful grace, that the original penalty denounced against the first transgression was so far modified as to give our race, when it had fallen in our first parents, an opportunity for regaining His

* Gen. iii. 15; Rev. xiii. 8.

favour. Nor was this new covenant without a law requiring man's obedience; for, "Enoch walked with GOD," and so "pleased GOD;"* as did Noah, who was "a preacher of righteousness."† It also had some appointed and visible religious services; for, Abel offered a sacrifice, and "a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain."‡ With it also were connected influences of Divine Grace; for, GOD'S SPIRIT strove with men.§ After which, GOD brought in upon the ungodly the flood, which "was the Baptism of the world, the iniquity whereof was purged by Water, and all that was corrupt was buried in that universal deluge, until, at last, in token that the evil was expiated, the Dove did rest upon the renewed face of the earth, and was the messenger of peace to those who were saved by those waters."‖

2. As before the deluge the descendants of Adam corrupted themselves, so after it the descendants of Noah (abusing the promise that the earth should not again be destroyed by a flood) turned from the

* Gen. v. 24; Heb. xi. 5.
† Gen. vi. 9; 2 Pet. ii. 5.
‡ Gen. iv. 3–7; Heb. xi. 4.
§ Gen. vi. 3.
‖ Comber, Brief Discourse upon the Offices of Baptism, Catechism, and Confirmation. London, 1677.

Most High, and served other gods.* From among these, in order to preserve a knowledge of Himself upon the earth, and to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, first promised to Eve, God chose Abram to be the Father of the Faithful, the first of a peculiar people. "For I know him," said God, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment."† With him, therefore, God made (or renewed) a covenant;‡ and with his descendants through him, both promising temporal blessings, and looking forward to the coming of Christ.§

3. Every covenant between two contracting parties has a seal. Accordingly, thereby exhibiting His condescension towards fallen man, utterly undone and lost but for the love and mercy of the Most High, which appeared in the promise to our first Mother, God instituted Circumcision as the seal of the covenant between Himself and Abraham and his descendants, in such a manner that the uncircumcised should

* Gen. ix. 9–17; Josh. xxiv. 2.
† Gen. xviii. 19.
‡ Gen. xv. 18.
§ Gen. xii. 1–3, 7; xiii. 14–17; xv. 5, 6, 13–16; xviii. 4–9, 19.

be cut off from his people, having broken the covenant.* Moreover, as in other covenants there are mutual promises, having fixed conditions of fulfilment, so here this covenant with Abraham and his descendants, which includes the Mosaic Dispensation, had a law prescribing its conditions. This Law was partly Moral, partly Ecclesiastical or Ritual. As Moral, it was, for the first time, formally given from Mount Sinai, after the departure of the Hebrews from Egypt for Canaan; Moses having, by the command of God, first sanctified the people.† As Ecclesiastical or Ritual, with its Ministers and services, it was subsequently drawn out by Moses before his death, and is detailed at length in his last four Books.

4. This Covenant, as it respected the Hebrews, was not, even under the Mosaic Dispensation, so exclusive, but that strangers, "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,"‡ could be admitted to its privileges, being then obliged to its obedience. Accordingly, "in all ages," says Maimonides, "when

* Gen. xvii. 9–14.
† Exod. xx. 1–17; xix. 10, 14.
‡ Eph. ii. 12.

an Ethnic [or Gentile] is willing to enter into the Covenant, and gather himself under the wings of the majesty of GOD, and take upon him the yoke of the Law, he must be circumcised, and baptized, and bring a sacrifice; or, if it be a woman, be baptized, and bring a sacrifice. As it is written,* 'As you are so shall the stranger be.' ['One ordinance shall be both for you of the congregation, and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you, an ordinance for ever, in your generations; as ye are, so shall the stranger be before the LORD.'] How are you? By circumcision and baptism, and bringing of a sacrifice. So likewise the stranger (or proselyte) through all generations; by circumcision and baptism, and bringing of a sacrifice. And at this time, when there is no sacrificing, they must be circumcised and baptized; and when the temple shall be built, they are to bring the sacrifice. A stranger that is circumcised and not baptized, or baptized and not circumcised, he is not a proselyte till he be both circumcised and baptized, and he must be baptized in the presence of three, &c."† Whensoever, therefore, a male became a

* Numb. xv. 15.

† Wall's History of Infant Baptism. Vol. I. Introd. See also Exod. xii. 43–49.

proselyte, then these ceremonies were always observed in his own case, and that of his male children already born. For females there was baptism and a sacrifice. If a child was fatherless, it was baptized at the desire of the mother. We learn, moreover, that it was the custom of the Jews to circumcise and baptize servants that were received from heathens into a state of servitude, holding them as proselytes ; and likewise, such infants as had been exposed in the fields, forests, or highways, by their heathen parents, as was often the case; and those whom they took captive in their wars, and intended to bring up in their religion. This rule, however, was applied only to proselytes from heathenism; none of Hebrew race were baptized, it being thought that the whole Jewish nation was holy, in consequence of its sanctification previous to the giving of the law.*

5. First adding, that the Jews called the Baptism of such persons—as are above mentioned—their "new birth," "regeneration," or "being born again," we have now these facts :

1. That those of Hebrew race were simply circumcised.

* Wall, Introd. Exod. xix. 6, 10, 14.

2. That to all others becoming proselytes, Baptism was also administered.

3. That infants were admitted into the Covenant.

II.—JOHN'S BAPTISM.

Baptism, as is evident, was no new thing to the Jews, when John Baptist appeared, administering it. Indeed, "some of their Rabbins had said of old, That, in the days of the Messiah, there would be so many converts that they should be forced to baptize them, because it would be impossible to circumcise them all." This supposition explains the question put to John, "Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that CHRIST, nor Elias, nor that Prophet?"* For, as they had been in the habit of baptizing such as would become proselytes, they could not understand why John should baptize such as were Jews already, if he were not more than he appeared, or gave himself out, to be.

But, as he said to them, there was a Greater "among them Whom they knew not;" "The Lamb of GOD, Which taketh away the sin of the world;"

* Comber, Com. Pr., Bap. John i. 25.

Who would "baptize with the HOLY GHOST" "and with fire;" Who must "increase"—all men coming to Him — whilst John "must decrease."* For, THIS was the CHRIST. John's mission, therefore, was of but temporary design, preparatory to CHRIST and His Kingdom. John's Baptism also was only "with water," and "unto repentance"—from sin indeed, but as to be exhibited in reference to, and in, the Redeemer's Kingdom; since, according to St. Paul, John taught "the people, that they should believe on Him Which should come after him, that is, CHRIST JESUS." And, as to his Baptism, it was to cease, St. Paul baptizing "in the Name of the LORD JESUS" certain ones who had received it. Nor, could it have been Christian Baptism, or for Christians. For, those whom the Apostle thus baptized, "had not [even] so much as heard whether there be any HOLY GHOST," having only been baptized, as "they said, Unto John's Baptism."†

* John i. 26, 29, 33; Matt. iii. 11; John iii. 26, 30.
† Matt. iii. 11; Acts xviii. 25; xix. 2–5.

III.—CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

1. *Its Institution.*

Baptism, being of easy observance, and its object as an initiatory rite having been known to the Jews, who styled it the new-birth or regeneration—as, our Lord gave Nicodemus to understand, he who was "a Master of Israel" should have known*—CHRIST adopted it for a Sacrament of His Church, formally instituting it for a perpetual ordinance in His last commission to the Apostles, saying, "All power is given unto ME in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach [disciple] all nations, baptizing them in the NAME of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."†

2. *Its Necessity.*

1. Of Baptism—as of the Lord's Supper—the Church Catechism says that it is "generally neces-

* John iii. 3, 5, 9, 10.
† Matt. xxviii. 18–20; also, Mark xvi. 15, 16.

sary to salvation," *i. e.*, "none may, without hazard of missing its peculiar graces, refuse to use it, who have the opportunity of being partakers thereof."* And the same truth is implied in the opening Exhortation, and Prayer, and the Gospel, of the Baptismal Offices.

2. Now, the necessity there is for ministering and receiving Baptism, springs from the principle which makes obedience to any Divine command—where obedience is possible—necessary to salvation. For that its ministration is commanded, appears both from its institution and the Apostolic commission already quoted; and that its reception is commanded also, appears from this saying of our Lord, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."†

3. Again, this necessity springs from the ends designed by its Institutor,—which ends, under Divine appointment, cannot ordinarily be attained otherwise. It is necessary, therefore, "for the remission of sins," as St. Peter told the Jews on the day of Pentecost;‡ for our regeneration, and admission

* Bp. Brownell's Prayer Book.

† Mark xvi. 16; also, Acts ii. 38; Titus iii. 5; 1 Pet. iii. 20, 21.

‡ Acts ii. 38.

into the Church of God, as our Lord said to Nicodemus.* Nor is this necessity taken away by any previous—real or supposed—descent of the Holy Ghost. For, notwithstanding Saul's conversion, and even supposing that any gift of the Holy Ghost to him preceded his baptism, he was nevertheless bidden to "be baptized, and wash away his sins, calling on the Name of the Lord."† So, likewise, Cornelius and his company were baptized, although the Holy Ghost had already fallen upon them.‡

3. *Infant Baptism lawful and necessary.*

Having spoken of Baptism, its institution and uses, we come, next, to consider its subjects; and, as there is no doubt concerning its general lawfulness and necessity in the case of Adults,—*i. e.*, where Baptism is administered at all,—we will now notice these points in their reference to Infants.

1. We have already seen that Infants were admitted into the Covenant of God, as made with Abraham, and as systematized by the Mosaic Law

* John iii. 3, 5, 7.

† Acts ix. 17; xxii. 16.

‡ Acts x. 44–48. But who does not see that this was designed as a token to Peter that he should have them baptized, though they were Gentiles?

and Ritual—those of Jewish parents, by circumcision; those of heathens, so remaining, or born to them before they themselves became proselytes, by circumcision, baptism, and a sacrifice. But, this Covenant,—in other words, the Church of GOD—although existing under (at least) two Dispensations, is one. For, according to St. Paul, the believing Gentiles are branches of a wild olive, grafted in upon the good olive tree, from which the natural branches, the unbelieving Jews, are broken off for their unbelief.* Very naturally, we find many points of resemblance—answering to each other—in the Church of, or under, the Christian and Jewish Dispensations, respectively:—Bishops, Priests, and Deacons of the Christian Ministry, to High Priests, Priests and Levites; the Eucharist to the Passover; and Baptism to Circumcision,—CHRIST'S one Sacrifice having fulfilled all that the Jewish sacrifices foreshadowed. But, it is equally natural to look for a like resemblance, in respect of the persons now to be admitted into the Covenant—into the Christian Church; and that by Baptism, taking the place of Circumcision or succeeding it. Moreover, it would have seemed strange and unnatural to the Jews, that

* Rom. xi. 13–24.

their children should be excluded when they themselves were admitted, the Christian Church and Dispensation thus becoming less comprehensive than the Jewish; and especially after that, in reply to their question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" St. Peter had said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the HOLY GHOST; for, the promise is unto you and to your children;"* nay, this rejection of their children would have excited a strong prejudice in their minds against Christianity, and have been a great obstacle to their conversion. They, therefore, who hold Infant Baptism to be, not according to CHRIST'S appointment, but a corruption or abuse, although practised by Christians generally and for centuries without dispute; and who, consequently, set up for Reformers of the Church, are bound to show where it is forbidden. For, such was the course pursued by the Anglican Reformers when correcting the Romish abuses, superadded to the Catholic faith and practice; as it is pursued by all who set out to reform any supposed or alleged or real corruption, abuse, or vice whatsoever.† There

* Acts ii. 38.

† Adams' Mercy for Babes, Ch. III. Pt. I, pp. 36–45.

are, it is true, no specified cases of Infant Baptism, in the New Testament Scriptures. Nor is this to be expected, the first converts from Judaism and Heathenism naturally being adults. But we may believe that the Jewish converts would—and did—bring their children with them to Baptism, still following the custom of their fathers in the case of proselytes; and what was most likely their own, when they came to John the Baptist, supposing him to be the CHRIST. And where, in either case, is there any prohibition of such belief? However, that Infant Baptism was practised early, before the death of the Apostle, John, is evident from the primitive writers of the Church; and their statements are a sufficient as well as satisfactory explanation, to what parties Baptism was designed to be administered. Such, accordingly, being the conclusion reached in respect of Infant Baptism, and the reasons for it, the members of the Church may the more readily assent to the interpretation put upon the Gospel, in the public Baptismal Service for Infants, even by its introduction as part of said service, and comply, "nothing doubting," with the exhortation which follows, in every respect there set forth.

4. *Infant Baptism necessary.*

1. It is necessary, as appointed for the remission of original sin, in infants. Wherefore, as St. Cyprian says, "If even to the most grievous offenders, and who had before sinned much against God, when they afterward believe, remission of sins is granted, and no one is debarred from Baptism and Grace, how much more ought not an infant to be debarred, who, being newly born, has in no way sinned, except that being born after Adam in the flesh, he has by his first birth contracted the contagion of the old death; who is, on this very account, more easily admitted to receive remission of sins, in that not his own but another's sins are remitted to him."*

2. Again, it is necessary, because there is no other mode appointed for the regeneration of infants; for, "being by nature born in sin, and the children of wrath, they are hereby made the children of grace."†

3. It is further necessary, because there is no other mode appointed for their admission into the Church, wherewith remission of sins and regeneration

* Ep. lxiv. 5. Oxford, J. H. Parker, 1844.
† Catechism, Quest. 18, Ans

are connected,—this of our LORD, "Except a man [one, or any one] be born of Water and of the SPIRIT, he can not enter into the Kingdom of GOD," including infants.*

4. It is necessary, finally, because they can not otherwise have a title to the promises made to the Church, which is the Body of CHRIST, the Kingdom of GOD, and, of which, being made members, they are also made members of CHRIST, children of GOD, and inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven.†

5. *The Offices for the Ministration of Baptism.*

Turning to these Offices, which, as members of the Church, we are bound to accept as teaching what the Church believes, we there find a confirmation of the preceding remarks.

1. (1.) In the Office for the ministration of Baptism to infants, and which, following a correct interpretation of the Rubric, is "to be used in the Church" only, we are besought, as "all men are conceived and born in sin, and our Saviour CHRIST saith, None can enter into the Kingdom of GOD,

* John iii. 5.
† Catechism, Quest. 2, Ans.

except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the HOLY GHOST," "to call upon GOD the Father," that He would "grant to *this child* that which by nature *he* can not have; that *he* may be baptized with water and the HOLY GHOST, and received into CHRIST'S Holy Church, and made *a* living *member* of the same." (2.) In the first prayer, after a statement of the fact that, by CHRIST'S Baptism, GOD did "sanctify [the element of] water to the mystical washing away of sin," we beseech Him to "mercifully look upon *this child;* to wash *him* and sanctify *him* with the HOLY GHOST; that *he*, being delivered from wrath, may be received into the ark of CHRIST'S Church," where we learn that the mystical washing and deliverance from wrath are connected with *his* reception into the Church. (3.) In the second prayer, "we call upon GOD for *this infant*, that *he*, coming to holy Baptism, may receive remission of sin by spiritual regeneration." (4.) So again, in the thanksgiving after the Exhortation upon the Gospel, we pray, "Give Thy HOLY SPIRIT to *this infant*, that *he* may be born again, and be made *an heir* of everlasting salvation."* (5.) And in the last prayer before the baptism, we pray for the sanctification of

* See 2d Ans. Catechism.

"THIS water to the mystical washing away of sin," and that "*this child* now to be baptized therein may receive the fulness of grace, and ever remain [where *he* is now to be placed] in the number of Thy faithful children." (6.) After the baptism, the baptized *child* is declared "regenerate and grafted into the Body of CHRIST'S Church;" and (7) we heartily thank GOD, "that it hath pleased Him to regenerate *this infant* with His HOLY SPIRIT," &c.

And, that (8) these effects—as summed up in the idea of regeneration, not including that of perseverance—are supposed by the Church to be connected with the Baptism ministered, and not dependent on any spiritual instrumentality or efficacy of preceding vows, promises, or professions, would seem to appear from the Office for Private Baptism, according to which, immediately after the baptism, and no questions having been asked, no vows, promises, or professions made, the same thanksgiving is offered, as just noticed; that is, for *this infant's* regeneration by the HOLY SPIRIT, *his* adoption as GOD'S *child*, and *his* incorporation into GOD'S holy Church.* Then, at the certification, which is to follow, "if the child after this sort baptized do afterwards live," the

* See page 14.

second Rubric orders the Minister to "receive *him* as one of the flock of true Christian people," as having been duly baptized, and being "now by Baptism incorporated into the Christian Church: for," says this certification, "our Lord JESUS CHRIST doth not deny His grace and mercy to such infants," &c. Accordingly, in the Exhortation upon the Gospel, the Sponsors are now told, not to doubt that CHRIST "HATH likewise favourably received *this* present *infant;* that He HATH embraced *him* with the arms of His mercy; and, as He hath promised in His holy word, WILL give unto *him* the blessing of eternal life, and make *him partaker* of His everlasting kingdom." That is, again, we learn first, what took place at the Baptism; and secondly, what encouragement there is for Sponsors undertaking for *the child*, as set forth in the remaining portions of this Supplementary Office, which have regard to the training and life of *the child* heretofore baptized and already regenerate. According to the English form of certification, *the child* is spoken of as "now, by the laver of regeneration in Baptism, received into the number of the children of GOD and heirs of everlasting life."

2. Turning to the Office for Adult Baptism, we find that similar remarks apply to adults baptized, except that (1) according to the opening Rubrics, they shall be examined "whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian religion," and "exhorted to prepare themselves, with prayers and fasting, for the receiving of this holy Sacrament;" that (2) "they shall be found fit;" that faith and repentance are presupposed in them, as bringing them to Baptism, and preparing them for it. For, in the Exhortation upon the Gospel, the people present are told, "Doubt ye not, but earnestly believe that GOD will favourably receive *these* present *persons*, (3) truly repenting and coming to Him by faith;" and "that (4) He will grant *them* remission of sins, and (5) bestow upon *them* the HOLY GHOST." After which, we pray, (6) "Give Thy HOLY SPIRIT to *these persons*, that they may be born again, and be made *heirs* of everlasting salvation; whilst (7) after the Baptism, they are declared "regenerate," and (8) in the final prayer are spoken of as "being now born again."

6. *Concluding Remarks.*

From all that precedes, we have reason to conclude that, in the judgment of the Church, since all men are conceived and born in sin, and therefore need something which, by nature, they can not have, and wherefore by Divine appointment they must come or be brought to Baptism, "they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin and of our adoption to be the sons of GOD by the HOLY GHOST, are visibly signed and sealed; faith is confirmed and grace increased by virtue of prayer unto GOD," as says the XXVII. article.

From this conclusion, however, some who are baptized may infer, and some, who dissent from the aforesaid conclusion, actually charge us with holding, That the baptized must necessarily be saved. The inference is wrong, and the charge unjust. For, not only does Scripture warn Christians, the baptized, to make this "their calling and election sure," and to "work out their salvation with fear and trembling"* —thus implying, and elsewhere directly teaching,† that the baptized may lose their inheritance; but,

* 2 Pet. i. 10; Phil. ii. 12. † Heb. vi. 4–6.

the Church also, therefore, implies and repeats this warning throughout all her Offices, especially in those appointed for the ministration of Baptism. For, in the case of Infant Baptism, we pray, in the first prayer, (1) that the baptized *child*, "being steadfast in faith, joyful through hope, and rooted in charity, MAY so pass through the waves of this troublesome world, that finally *he* MAY come to the land of everlasting life;" in the second, (2) "that *he* MAY enjoy the everlasting benediction of GOD'S heavenly washing, and MAY come to the eternal kingdom which He hath promised by CHRIST our Lord;" in the last before Baptism, (3) that *he* MAY "ever remain in the number of His faithful children." Again, (4) "We sign *him* with the sign of the cross, in token that hereafter—following *his* Baptism—*he* shall not be ashamed * * to continue CHRIST'S faithful soldier and servant unto *his* life's end." Then (5) we are taught to "make our prayers unto GOD, that *this child* MAY lead the rest of *his* life according to this beginning;" and concluding with the prayer, (6) "that *he*, being dead unto sin, and living unto righteousness, and being buried with CHRIST in His death, MAY crucify the old man, and UTTERLY ABOLISH the whole body of sin, and that as *he* IS made *par-*

taker of the death of GOD'S SON, *he* MAY also be partaker of His resurrection; so that, finally, with the residue of GOD'S holy Church, *he* MAY be *an inheritor* of His everlasting kingdom."

The Office for Adult Baptism speaks in like manner, to quote only the following from the final prayer: "Give Thy HOLY SPIRIT to *these persons;* that being NOW born again, and made *heirs* of everlasting salvation * * *they* MAY continue Thy *servants*, and attain Thy promises."* The Church does not, indeed, speak directly, in these Offices, of the possibility of losing the promises and eternal life; and apparently for this reason, that, whilst such possibility is implied, She would direct the chief attention of the baptized to their blessings and privileges, rather than to the loss of them; would now rather have them look forward to what is yet to be done and attained, than look back to the wrath from which they have so far escaped; would excite them to the "love" which "casteth out fear," and not renew the "fear" which "hath torment."† At the same time, however, we *are* taught to pray that

* See Exhortations to the sponsors and to the baptized, respectively, in the two Offices. Also Catechism, Ans. 4, 9, and last. Articles ix., xvi., xxv.

† 1 John iv. 18.

"we finally lose not the things eternal," and "fail not finally to attain the heavenly promises," in the Collects for the 4th and 13th Sunday after Trinity.

But one remark more, pointing at some possible objections, and this part of our subject will be concluded. Observe, then, that hitherto the attempt has been made to state affirmatively the law of our regeneration, and as connected with Baptism; not the possible exceptions under that law, and with which we have nothing to do. For, the remarks of the present Manual are strictly addressed to such as are members of the Church, having, or having had, every opportunity of being duly baptized; and who, therefore, come strictly under the rule. Equally natural is it that the subject of "renovation" should not have been noticed; although, to obviate discussion, the following prayers shall be quoted: "Almighty God, * * grant that we, being regenerate and made Thy children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit." Again, "Grant us the true circumcision of the Spirit, that, our hearts and all our members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lusts, we may in all things obey Thy blessed will." As see the Collects for Christmas Day, and the Festival of the Circumcision.

And, would we but attentively examine the Collects, indeed the whole Prayer Book, we must see how little room there is for many popular objections, which originate in the confounding of one doctrine with another.

PART II.

I.—THE NECESSITY OF CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION.

Baptism being "generally necessary to salvation," and its effects such as heretofore stated, its ministration and reception are in no case to be omitted, when there is an opportunity for both. And neither its necessity nor its beneficial effects are ignored by a plausible and too common objection, which tends to do away with all Baptism whatsoever. The objection is implied in the following question: "'How comes it to pass that so many children do afterward fall off to all impurity?' I answer, so do too many grown persons also; and neither infants nor men are so regenerated in this life as absolutely to extinguish the concupiscence: for, the flesh will still lust against the Spirit; but then God gives the Spirit also to lust against the flesh.* He leaves the corruption, to try and exercise us; but so that He engageth to enable us to get the better through this new nature implanted in us, if we will improve it, and follow the dictates of the Holy Spirit; but by neglect, or

* Gal. v. 17.

wilful complying with the flesh, we may lose this grace again. Our gracious FATHER hath already done His part, and will do it more and more, as the child shall be capable and willing to receive it; and if this seems strange to any whose opinions are taken up from later definitions of regeneration, let them dispute with holy Cyprian, (not with me,) who saith, 'The grace of GOD is equally distributed in Baptism, but it may either be diminished or increased afterward, by our acts and conversation.' The sum is, That Baptism doth seal a pardon to us for all former transgressions, and begets us again to the hope of eternal life; that it restores us to the favour of GOD, and gives us a new relation to Him; and, finally, it heals our nature by the SPIRIT hereby conveyed to us: and, though all this be on condition of our keeping our part of the covenant, yet that makes not GOD'S mercy less, nor ought it to diminish any of our praises, but only it must make our prayers at present more earnest, and the child's care hereafter more strict, to make this 'its calling and election sure.'"* As then we pray for the baptized, infants and adults, "that *they* may lead the rest of *their* life according to this beginning," adults being exhorted,

* Comber, p. 435.

and infants requiring to be nurtured, accordingly, in order that being "partakers of the Divine nature," they may grow up into "perfect men in CHRIST;"* and, as infants especially must needs be trained to do, as well as taught to know, their duty in this regard, some one, or more, must undertake this office. In a general way, it belongs to the Church, but has been, and is, necessarily assigned by Her to certain persons who shall act as Her ministers or subordinates in this matter. Hence, the Sponsorial Office, and whatsoever appertains thereto.

II.—THE SPONSORIAL OFFICE.

1. *Its History.*

1. Points of resemblance between the Jewish and the Christian Church have already been mentioned, together with certain Baptisms ministered in the former under certain circumstances, as in the case of adult proselytes, of infants exposed by their heathen parents, and the like.† Now, when such persons or infants were to be received into the com-

* 2 Pet. i. 4; Col. i. 28.
† Pages 45, 46.

munion of the Church, as Jews, and trained accordingly; and when, according to custom, they were received with Baptism, Circumcision, and a Sacrifice; as, moreover, the Mosaic Law strictly enjoined that its statutes and judgments should be taught, especially to the young,* "infants not being able to profess for themselves, were baptized, at the request of the father if living, and of the mother, if the father were dead, upon the profession of the house of judgment (or court); that is, the three men have the care of the Baptism, according to the law of the Baptism of proselytes, which requires three men, who do so become to the infants a father. All males under thirteen years and a day, and all females under twelve years and a day, were considered minors or infants, unable to profess for themselves, and were baptized as just stated."†

The Court, or House of Judgment, therefore, stood to the baptized, in a relation, similar to that of our Sponsors; whilst some also suppose that the Witnesses, at the naming of Isaiah's son, were of this character.‡

* Deut. vi. 7; xi. 19; Ps. lxviii. 2–7.
† Wall, Hist. Inf. Bap. Introd. § iii.
‡ Isaiah viii. 2.

Now, "the Jews," Josephus tells us, "were also above all things careful that their children might be instructed in the Law; to which end they had in every village a person called the Instructor of Babes, (to which St. Paul seems to allude,) whose business it was to teach children the Law till they were ten years of age, and from thence till they were fifteen, to instruct them in the Talmud. Grotius tells us, that at thirteen they were brought to the house of God, in order to be publicly examined; and, being approved, were then declared to be Children of the Precept, *i. e.*, they were obliged to keep the Law, and were from thenceforth answerable for their own sins."* Thus much as respects the Jews and Jewish proselytes.

2. Passing on to the Church of the Christian Dispensation, as parents are the natural guardians of their children, we find that St. Paul, when enumerating the duties of the members of the Church towards each other, says to "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,"† the necessity

* Wheatley on Com. Prayer, Ch. viii. (Joseph. Antiq. Bk. 4, c. 8; Rom. ii. 20.)

† Eph. vi. 4.

of their religious training being implied. And, assuredly, it must have been strange if now there had been less provision for the instruction of Christian, than there was formerly for that of Jewish, children.

3. But, as parents might neglect their duty, as children might be without parents who could or would perform it; as, for example, in the case of those exposed on the highways by the heathen; the Christian Church likewise took order respecting this matter, and appointed that certain persons, whether parents or others, should stand in the relation of Sponsors to the baptized, and see to their religious training. According to Bingham, "there were three sorts of Sponsors made use of in the primitive Church: 1. For children who could not renounce, or profess, or answer for themselves. 2. For such adult persons, as by reason of sickness or infirmity, were in the same condition with children incapacitated to answer for themselves. 3. For all adult persons in general. For, the Church required Sponsors also for those who were otherwise qualified to make their own responses."

Next, we may remark that, whilst the ancient

canons varied somewhat as to particulars, yet it seems to have been a very general rule "to have but one Sponsor for each individual; a man—a Deacon—for a man; a woman—a Deaconess—for a woman; but, parents—if they would act for their children; masters, for their slaves; the holy virgins for children exposed; and charitable persons (probably of either sex) for children whose parents were dead."

Then, as for the duties of Sponsors, these—as respecting infants—were, (1) "to answer in their names at Baptism, and (2) not only by example, but by word and instruction, to teach them the great duties of chastity, humility, sobriety, and peace, forasmuch as they had answered in their stead, that they renounced the devil, his pomps and his works.—In the cases of adults incapacitated from answering for themselves,—as where persons intending to be baptized, were taken ill, became frenzied, or speechless, in consequence,—responses were made for them as for children; and in the event of their recovery, the sponsors were to acquaint them, as witnesses, with what had been done for them, and as guardians of their good behaviour, to induce them to make good the promises, which they, in their name,

had made for them." And it seems that such adults as were "too dull and heavy to learn, were baptized with the same formalities as children, whom they resembled."—All other adults answered for themselves, their sponsors being "curators and guardians of their spiritual life; and required to take care of their instruction and morals, as well before as after Baptism."

Finally, in ancient times, no persons were "excluded from this office, except catechumens, energumens, heretics, and penitents; that is, persons who either were yet never in full communion with the Church, as being themselves unbaptized; or else such as had forfeited the privileges of their baptism and Church-communion by their errors, or crimes, or incapacity to assist others, who needed assistance themselves. And by some canons, persons who were never confirmed, were excluded from being sponsors both in Baptism and Confirmation."*

4. Passing on to the times of King Edward VI., in the Baptismal Offices of his Liturgies, Godfathers and Godmothers are named in the Rubrics, also styled "sureties," in the exhortation preceding the

* Bingham's Christian Antiquities, Book xi. ch. viii.

answers made by them in the name of the children to be baptized.

And in the Confirmation Office (as in the Catechism) said persons have the former designation, the Rubric ordering that, "they (children) shall be brought to the Bishop by one that shall be his Godfather or Godmother, that every child may have a witness of his confirmation."*

The Rubric, just quoted, is still retained, in nearly the same words, after the Catechism in the present Prayer Book of the Church of England, whilst in the Office for "the Ministration of Public Baptism of Infants" it is ordered that, "There shall be for every male child to be baptized, two Godfathers and one Godmother; and for every female, one Godfather and two Godmothers." The XXIXth of the English Canons, agreed upon in Synod, A. D. 1603, moreover, orders that, "no parent shall be urged to be present, nor be admitted as godfather to his own child; * * neither shall any person be admitted godfather or godmother to any child at christening or confirmation, before the said person so undertaking hath received the Holy Communion."—In the case of Adult Baptism, the Office appointed simply

* Cardwell's Two Liturgies of Edward VI., pp. 325, ss., and 348.

mentions Godfathers and Godmothers, although, doubtless, the principle of the Rubric and Canon last quoted determines, what, and how many, persons shall act in any way as Sponsors.

In the American Book of Common Prayer, the Rubrics of the English Baptismal Offices are in effect repeated, with the following direction from the English Rubrics and Canon, viz., that there shall be Godfathers and Godmothers, "when they can be had;" "and parents shall be admitted as Sponsors, if desired."

So that, here, the Rubric permits us to adopt one of three courses, according to circumstances. 1. To have three Sponsors other than the parents,—if the former "can be had," and the latter do not desire to "be admitted as Sponsors."* 2. The parents and one other—if the former desire to "be admitted" and the latter "can be had." 3. The parents alone,—if they desire to "be admitted," and no other "can be had."

In the Office for ministering Baptism to Adults, Godfathers and Godmothers only—also styled, Witnesses,—are mentioned in the Rubrics; although

* This would include those cases also in which parents are dead; and where they refuse to act, but consent to others' acting in their stead.

here also the principle of the first Rubric, regulating this matter in the case of infants, is again supposed to indicate what, and how many, persons shall act.

Such, in brief, seems to be the general history of the Sponsorial Office, perhaps, from the time of Isaiah to the present day; so far as that history, in the way of setting forth a precedent to be respected by us, bears upon the question of its present lawfulness and propriety, the various changes that have occurred and still appear in respect of the number and character of Sponsors being referable to discipline, under which head, rather than that of doctrine, the whole matter is mostly to be considered.

2. *Sponsorial duties towards Infants baptized.*

Since the duties of Godfathers and Godmothers naturally differ according as they stand for Infants, or with Adults, at their Baptism, to learn what these duties are from the Baptismal Offices, we shall be obliged to consider the latter separately. Nor will it be inappropriate, in view of the purpose for which these remarks are presented, to address what follows, more directly to such as are, or may be, interested in the duties aforesaid. And reference will

be had to the cases, in which others than parents, "where they can be had," act as Sponsors, parents themselves, when acting in this character, being considered as having all the sponsorial, superadded to their otherwise parental, duties.

1. Having determined, then, thus to act, you first answer negatively to the question with which the ministration of Baptism begins, "Hath *this child* been already baptized or no?" thus enforcing the principle that, as there is "one LORD, one Faith, one Baptism," "so, no child ought to be baptized twice. And both the minister and congregation are admonished to be very serious and devout now in behalf of the present infant, since it can never have the like opportunity for its purification."*

2. Following the exhortation and the prayers, you, as well as the congregation, are taught, by the Church, from the Gospel appointed, that this good work of presenting and baptizing a child is allowed of GOD the FATHER, and of CHRIST, by being made a member of Whom, it is also made "a child of GOD;" and that, therefore, you should go on with your part of this good work, "nothing doubting." And,

* Comber. Ephes. iv. 5.

although the blessings appointed to be derived to the child through its Baptism, are no wise hindered or lessened by any defect of faith, or of other fitness, in you its presenters, you are here encouraged to act in full faith ; and so doing, have reason to look for such blessings on yourselves also as will enable you to accomplish what you now undertake and begin.

3. GOD'S part in the covenant, into which the child is to be entered with Him by Baptism, having been stated, you are then called upon to promise in the child's name—*he* being unable to answer for *himself*—that *he* will keep *his* part of the same covenant, on the doing of which the effectual blessing of GOD so largely depends as respects his Christian life and final salvation, viz. : that "*he* will renounce the devil and all his works ; the vain pomp and glory of this wicked world, with all covetous desires of the same, and all the sinful desires or lusts of the flesh ; that *he* will believe GOD's holy Word, all the Articles of the Christian Faith as contained in the Apostles' Creed ; that *he* will obediently keep GOD's holy will and commandments, and walk in the same all the days of *his* life," as variously

expressed in the Exhortation to the Preface of the covenant, the Interrogatories, and the Catechism. In other words, Repentance, Faith, and Obedience, are promised in *his* name. And you are not only told that this promise is required of you, but you make it, before GOD and the congregation, in the most solemn manner, when you answer to the questions here put to you by His ministers, of whom St. Paul says, that they are "ambassadors for CHRIST; as though GOD did beseech by them, praying men in CHRIST'S stead to be reconciled to GOD."*

4. All the preliminary steps to the ministration of the Baptism have now been taken; and, as the Godfathers and Godmothers, you are next required to "name this child." It was customary among the Jews to name a child at his circumcision; as, in the case of Isaac, John the Baptist, and likewise of Jesus. At the institution of circumcision, Abram's name was changed to Abraham, and that of Sarai to Sarah. So, Saul of Tarsus, as a Christian, was known by the name of Paul.† Now, "this name

* 2 Cor. v. 20.

† Gen. xxi. 2, 3; Luke ii. 59, 60; 21; Gen. xvii. 5, 15; Acts xiii. 2, 9; Wheatley, ch. vii. § 2.

(though it may be privately resolved upon by the relations, yet it) must be dictated by the Godfather, the witness of the New Birth, the surety who engageth *the child* shall lead a new life ; and then solemnly given by the Minister, because he is in GOD's stead, Who we hope will give it a new nature also. We derive one name together with original guilt from our parents, which ought to humble us, and mind us of our being born in sin. But, this new name we receive at our regeneration to admonish us of our new birth, and our heavenly kindred. This Christian name was given us when we were listed under CHRIST's banner, and it is a badge that we belong to GOD, so that as often as we hear it, we should remember the vow then made in our behalf. The custom of old was to write the soldier's name upon his shield, by which he was engaged in honour not to lose that shield, unless he lost his life. Even so hath GOD given us our name and our faith together, so that, if we apostatize, our name will be our eternal infamy. We have a new name ; let us walk worthy of it and lead a new life, either striving to make our name exemplary if there be no Saint of it, or else labouring to be like those of our ancestors or of GOD's Saints, who have worn

it worthily before us; so shall it be recorded not only in the Church's Register, but in the Book of Life, and stand there forever."*

4. The Baptism having now been administered, after appointed prayers, there is rehearsed in few words what the baptized *child* "*hath* promised by you *his* sureties," and the exhortation proceeds to state what are your duties towards *him* from this time forward. (1.) And first, you are bidden to "remember,"—to bear in mind continually your "parts and duties," whilst they are yours and until they are performed and completed. You are not to suppose that whatsoever has hitherto been done by you, when answering for *the child* and presenting *him* at the font, is a mere form involving no further relations to the baptized, and no obligations. You have solemnly, and before witness on earth and in Heaven, of your own free will, bound yourselves by a vow from which there is no release until its obligations have been met. You must therefore "remember" what has been done and what there yet remains to do. That is, (2.) "to see that *this infant* be taught, so soon as *he* shall be able to learn,

* Gen. xxv. 25; Ruth iv. 17; Luke i. 59; Comber.

what a solemn vow, promise and profession *he* hath here made by you." No matter, whether you, or the parents, or others act as teachers, you are to see that the child is taught, yourselves making continual inquiry into *his* progress. You are to use your utmost diligence when the duty of thus teaching falls upon you personally ; or, if not, and parents or others are neglectful, to admonish them of this their duty, always and in all cases seeing that it be done. And, it is here believed that, were children dúly taught, not only what is their duty towards God and His law, as moral and accountable beings, but what moreover is their covenant relation, in which they already stand towards Him, instead of being practically led into the supposition that they are but as heathens, they would more generally and actually proceed as they began at their Baptism, and with less necessity for the marked change which is designated by the word, conversion. (3.) This understood then, as to your duty generally, you are to proceed ; and, "that *this child* may know the better" what *he* hath vowed, promised and professed at his Baptism, "ye shall call upon *him* to hear sermons." Which, doubtless, means that, you shall see to *his* attending the services of the Church, and

that he hearkens to the instructions there given *him* directly or as one of the congregation, by readings from God's Word* and by "sermons" so called. It is a great mistake to defer the bringing of children to church until they reach that very indefinite age, "when they know how to behave," as some say. It is hardly possible that they can be brought too young. A silent influence is exerted, and a habit formed, which—as many who have been accustomed to attend the services of God's House from their earliest days, can testify—last in their effect through life; and even where unhappily the subjects have fallen far from the strictness and regularity and reverence of their childhood. And, it is a mere assumption that, the services and the sermon being above the comprehension of the very young, no impression is made upon their minds by the solemnities they witness, and what they hear from the desk and pulpit. They are not such inattentive spectators and hearers as is sometimes supposed. A passage of Scripture, or a comment upon some one of its parables or histories, in an ordinary sermon, although not particularly addressed to them, is often noticed; and, if for the present forgotten, in after

* Acts xv. 21.

years is remembered. Nor need we wait for the reviving memories of after years, if you as Sponsors do your duty at once, directing attention to what is uttered, training them up to believe that they are brought to GOD'S House to worship, to hear and be instructed. The Clergy themselves will also bear in mind that, of such little ones their congregations are largely composed, and shape their instructions accordingly,—both those which are given in general course, and those given in compliance with the following Rubric, which Sponsors are likewise to remember. "The Minister of every Parish shall upon Sundays and Holy Days, or upon some other convenient occasions, openly in the Church, instruct or examine as many children of his Parish, sent unto him, as he shall think convenient in some part of this Catechism."

(4.) Such being the general duty of instruction on the part of Sponsors, you are "chiefly to provide that the baptized child may learn the Creed, the LORD'S Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health."—This learning of the aforesaid portions of the Catechism requires no further notice here than, that it respects the articles

of that faith and obedience to which the baptized are already pledged, and a habit of prayer—in our LORD's own words—for that grace which alone can produce and continue the obedience of a living faith, in even the regenerate. Although it may be added that, the objection to children's presence in the Church, while very young, on the ground of their not being able to comprehend what they hear, must apply here also; and, is sufficiently answered by saying that, if perfect comprehension of what is taught from the Scriptures and the Formularies of the Church is to be the rule, adults as well as children must be excluded: for, there are many mysteries connected with our religion which can not be understood, but only known as revealed, and therefore must simply be believed, and practically admitted.—You have also to remember that what the baptized *child is* thus taught is "for *his* soul's health;" so that, it can not be a matter of indifference, in view of this end, viz., the present soundness of the soul in order to its final salvation, whether *he* be instructed or not; but, it has been determined that, there should and shall be right instruction, part whereof, at least, is included in the Catechetical teaching already noticed as enjoined upon you.

And, indeed, would any but heartily adopt the Creed, sincerely keep the Commandments, being aided by that grace which, we may well believe, God will bestow in answer to the prayer provided for us by His Son to be addressed to Him, we can not see how they should come far short, if at all, of that character and conduct which are well-pleasing in His sight.—However, you are not to limit such instructions to the particulars already named, but to include "all other things which a Christian ought to know and believe." What then are these *other* things? All such, undoubtedly, as tend to the edification of the Christian, his growth in the Body of Christ Who is our example. And, as your Sponsorial duties cease when your spiritual wards shall have been confirmed, these "other things" may be supposed to include all that is required of the baptized previous to Confirmation; of which more in due course.

5. Should you now conclude that, when the Catechism has been learned, or is in course of being learned, by the pupil under your directions or instructions, your duty has been completely performed; and this, we fear, is too common an impression, to the prejudice of the Church in the

estimation of many—"remember," that you have still further to "provide"—"that *this child* may be virtuously brought up to lead a godly and a Christian life." With the teaching of Creeds, Commandments, and the like, we have no right whatever to dispense. That is settled. But, it would be an error equally great,—and, considering the case of the servant who knew his Lord's will, but did it not, fraught with awful consequences,—did Sponsors suppose, and therefore convey the impression to their wards, that nothing more than the learning heretofore commended is required. You are not, therefore, to rest satisfied with the oral or other instruction given as enjoined. This is to have a practical result, influencing the whole life of the baptized, on earth. You are, consequently, to "provide," that "*this child* be virtuously brought up,"—in other words, that *he* be trained up in some way in which *he* ought to go, and habituated to walk therein. Although it may, or need, not be doubted that, the very fact of a Baptism ministered, which introduces its subject into the number of God's children, (and, apart from the spiritual effects of the rite itself,) gives *him* a covenant title to blessings promised all such as are baptized—which

God is now only the more willing to confer,—yet does the spiritual life of the regenerate, now begun, require as much nurturing as the natural life of every one born into this world, and must not be any more neglected. The child is not to grow up, somehow, by chance, but to be "brought up;" which implies nurture, care, and guidance,—the instruction given, showing what *he* must do in order to a full and mature spiritual growth; and the bringing-up including such action. And, although no other can well be supposed in this connection, still the Church appoints that this bringing-up shall be "virtuous," a requisition which, because of many doubtful explanations of the word, virtue, is further and more strictly defined. The child is to "be brought up to lead a godly life;" a "God-like" life, as evidencing that *he* is "a partaker of the Divine nature," to become by help thereof as "perfect" man, "as our Father in Heaven is perfect" God. And, that this is not a merely abstract, unpractical perfectness of an invisible life within, there is added that, this "godly" life must be "Christian" also. The will of man, made to agree with the will of God, is then to be exhibited outwardly in action, after Christ's example, and in obedience to His

laws as these regulate the actions of body, soul and spirit, every duty, enjoined as due to God and one's neighbour, being included. Nor is this all. But, the baptized *child is* thus to be brought *up* and trained, "remembering always, that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession" therein made; "which is, to follow the example of our Saviour Christ, and to be made like unto Him; that as—on the one hand—He died and rose again for us, so—on the other—should we, who are baptized, die from sin, and rise again unto righteousness;" which death from sin is exhibited effectually by our "continually mortifying all our evil and corrupt affections;" as is the rising again unto righteousness, by our "daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." All this is what *the child* is to be taught to remember through instructions given as to the nature of that Baptism which *he* has received, and of the religious profession *he* therein, even if unconsciously, made, and to be exemplified in a life consistent therewith.

6. The foregoing Exhortation ended, as stating the duties obligatory upon Sponsors for children, there is added one other direction, as follows. "Ye

are to take care that *this child* be brought to the Bishop to be confirmed by him, so soon as *he* can say the Creed, the LORD'S Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, and *is* sufficiently instructed in the other parts of the Church Catechism set forth for that purpose."

Now, as these "other parts" include explanations of the Creed, the LORD'S Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Sacraments, as of faith and repentance previous to or following upon the reception of the latter, the ability to "say the Creed, the LORD'S Prayer, and the Commandments," does not determine the time for Confirmation; for, the additional and "sufficient instruction" would still be wanting. Has this, then, been given when *the child* can "say" the whole Catechism?

In reply to this question, it might be answered that, no such child with such preparation, which may be attained at a very early age, would be allowed to make the Baptismal vows for *himself* without Sponsors; and how, then, these same vows as renewed in Confirmation?

Again, were this latter rite, as administered, only a means of grace, through prayer and imposition of hands of the Bishop, and not also a covenanting act

on the part of those confirmed who now renew their vows, its ministration might follow immediately upon that of Baptism, if the Bishop were present ; and in such case, the Church would doubtless have still provided for Sponsors at Confirmation ; whereas, in this country, there is no such provision, every person confirmed answering for himself, without either Sponsor or Witness. Otherwise, it is probable that another peculiarity of the Confirmation Office, as given in King Edward's Liturgies, would have been retained ; that is, the rite would partake more of the nature of a benediction, no question being put to the parties confirmed at the time of their Confirmation.

But, in the Preface to "Confirmation, wherein is contained a Catechism for children," as set forth in even the above Liturgies, we read concerning this rite that, "it is most meet to be ministered when children come to that age, that partly by the frailty of their own flesh, partly by the assaults of the world and the devil, they begin to be in danger to fall into sin," or "into sundry kinds of sin." And this undoubtedly points at a later period of their lives than that referred to in the Rubrical admonition to "the People, that they defer not the Baptism

of their children longer than the first or second Sunday next after their birth, or other Holy Day falling between, unless upon great and reasonable cause,"— as given in the opening Rubric of the Private Baptismal Office, in our Prayer Book. Such later period is still further designated in the following section of the Preface above quoted. After stating the same preliminaries to Confirmation as are contained in the final direction to Sponsors among us, "this order is" pronounced "most convenient to be observed, for divers considerations. First, because that when children come to years of discretion and have learned what their godfathers and godmothers promised for them in baptism, they may then themselves, with their own mouth, and with their own consent, openly before the church, ratify and confess (or, confirm,) the same; and also promise, that by the grace of GOD they will evermore endeavour themselves faithfully to observe and keep such things as they by their own mouth and confession have assented unto."* This agrees, almost literally, with the Preface of our own Confirmation Office. And now, is there not something more

* Cardwell's Liturgies, p. 344. Note also that, in these, the Catechism ends with the explanation of the LORD'S Prayer.

implied than the mere ability to "say" the Catechism?

Further still, children baptized in infancy, and adults, are confirmed according to the same Order of Confirmation, answering together the same question, at the same time. Wherefore, it is to be inferred that in the cases of both there should be similar fitness for the rite; that, children should have so learned the Catechism as that they can intelligently renew or confirm their Baptismal vows; that, when after due instruction they are "brought to the Bishop," yet are they to come as voluntarily as they "consent" and "assent" to the "confession" now made; in fine, that, their moral fitness, resulting from the instruction and training for which, at their Baptism, their Sponsors are exhorted to provide, must, as it is likely to, be apparent. And does not this imply sufficient preparation for their admission to the LORD'S Supper?

Finally, without determining what number of years amount to "a competent age" and "years of discretion"—although, from analogy in the case of our LORD and of Jewish customs in a similar matter, we might infer the proper age to be included between twelve and perhaps fifteen,—Sponsors have

not the final decision to make. It is enough for them to know what, at the least, is expected of them, whilst all should be willing to do the most. And their duties terminate when the following Rubric, after the Catechism, is carried into effect. "Whensoever the Bishop shall give knowledge for children to be brought unto him for their Confirmation, the Minister of every parish shall either bring, or send in writing, with his hand subscribed thereunto, the names of all such persons within his parish, as *he shall think fit* to be presented to the Bishop to be confirmed."

3. *Duties of Godfathers and Godmothers towards persons baptized at adult age.*

The principal points to be noticed here are contained in the Exhortation to the Godfathers and Godmothers, after the Baptism, the essential difference from what is done in the case of infants, being that, here the Candidates answer for themselves, and are chiefly addressed in the exhortations of the Baptismal office. What follows, however, is addressed to the Godfathers and Godmothers,—also, in view of their duties, called Witnesses.

"Forasmuch as *these persons have* promised, in

your presence, to renounce the devil and all his works, to believe in God and to serve Him; ye must remember that it is your part and duty to put *them* in mind, what a solemn vow, promise, and profession, *they have* now made before this congregation, and especially before you *their* chosen witnesses. And ye are also to call upon *them* to use all diligence to be rightly instructed in God's holy word; that so *they* may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and live godly, righteously, and soberly, in this present world."

This can scarcely require any explanation, although the following summary may be useful. 1. The Baptism of *these persons*, with its accompanying solemnities, takes place "in your presence," "before this congregation," "and before you *their* chosen witnesses." 2. As such "witnesses," you are "to put *them* in mind," impressing upon *them* the fact and nature of this *their* profession. 3. You are to exhort *them* to diligence, in acquiring the "knowledge" which "maketh wise," and is "the power of God, unto salvation," and in leading godly, righteous, and sober lives.

4. *Qualifications of Godfathers and Godmothers.*

1. As (strictly) Sponsors, or Sureties in the case of Infants.

The qualifications of Sponsors, in general, as ruled in the Primitive Church, and by the present law of the Church of England, have already been stated.* Wherefore, having reference to the latter, since—according to the Preface of our Book of Common Prayer—"this [the Protestant Episcopal] Church is far from intending to depart from the Church of England in any essential point of doctrine, *discipline*, or worship; or further than local circumstances require," the fair inference would seem to be that, in "this Church" also, no person should be admitted Sponsor before *he* "hath received the Holy Communion." Apart, however, from this inferential conclusion, it is not remembered that there is, among us, any Rubric or Canon regulating the point now under notice. Although, it may not be out of place, here, to suggest the propriety and, in many respects, the necessity of some determination upon the subject by the Church, and as relieving the Clergy from an embarrassing position as to discipline. For, it is

* See § 3, pp. 71–73, and § 4, p. 73, 74.

supposed that, the reception and the rejection of any persons as Sponsors, at least when called in question, are left to their discretion, and controlled simply by custom, which, in the intention of the Church, should be according to Anglican, and then to Primitive, law. For, in no other way can we determine that Sponsors must have been even baptized. As, however, it is not intended to discuss Clerical prerogatives in this connection, we will approach the subject from another side, and endeavour to state certain qualifications, without which none should, in conscience, either wish or venture to act in the Sponsorial capacity.

1. If the nature, effects, and necessity of Baptism, with the obligations resting, in consequence of it, upon its subjects, be such as heretofore stated; if, moreover, the baptized need actual instruction in whatsoever "a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's health," and such training as shall, or most likely will, result in "a Godly and Christian life," lest their Baptism become to them worse than vain, how can you offer yourselves as their Sponsors, without having formed the conscientious determination—as God shall help you by His grace—to do your whole duty? Can you become Godfathers and

Godmothers, and yet leave these your spiritual children, without nurture, untaught and untrained? Are you their Sureties, answering for their future faith and obedience, and yet, in fact, careless, whether they shall have the one or exhibit the other, and, whether they are making any progress towards such a result, as they grow in years and knowledge? Can you forget that you are yourselves under a vow, which, being carelessly and voluntarily broken, must bring after it fearful consequences to you and them; but, being kept, will bring down blessings upon them and you, in time and for eternity? Consider, that your selection by parents, as Sponsors for their children, is not to be regarded as a mere matter of "compliment;" or, if so in any sense or degree, as a "compliment" to your Christian characters, and known fidelity to any trust committed to your care. Nor suppose that, your presenting a child at the font is a form, involving nothing further than the gift of a name, an ornament, a cup, or a dress,—and this has only too often been supposed. Let your Godchild be your "name-child" and "name-sake," if you will, but see to it first that your own name, as borne by you, be such as *he* ought, and will be delighted, being able, to honour. Let *him* also, and

first, be taught to wear "the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight of GOD, of great price." And so lead *him* on, as that *he* shall determine, "I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the LORD." And, give *him* your fortunes, if you like, but not before, as *his* Sponsors, you have taught *him* to "use this world as not abusing it."*

Evidently, then, the first qualification, of which you should be conscious to yourselves, before you enter upon the Sponsorial relation towards any *child*, is the resolution to take care that *he* be rightly instructed and "virtuously brought up." So that, knowing *his* renunciations, vows and promises at the font, *he* may keep, and keep to, them, all *his* days. Contingencies there may be, and unforeseen, which may withdraw *him* from your neighbourhood and its influence. This you can not always control. But, you can ordinarily determine that, you will not take so solemn vows, in another's stead and behalf, unless it be previously understood that, as opportunity offers, you are to have the privilege of keeping them. And, considering that the earlier impressions are made, the deeper and more lasting they

* See p. 79. 1 Pet. iii. 4; Ps. cxvi. 13; 1 Cor. vii. 31.

become, you will do well to urge upon parents who are likely to call upon you, that they defer not the Baptism of their children, thereby adding, most probably, to the difficulties of your office.* Meanwhile, no doubt, there is always occasion for great prudence and discretion on your part, (and for the exercise of which rules can not well be given,) lest you infringe upon the rights and duties, by Divine law, belonging to parents as regards their children. Nor, whilst in such case exhortation and remonstrance may become all that you can offer, can any errors and even vices in parents, set aside the parental character, or release children from the obligation to filial reverence and obedience, always and in all respects; provided, that no violation of GOD's laws be enjoined upon them. In that case, GOD is to be obeyed rather than man, even though the latter be a parent.

(2.) Again, assuming that Baptism is such in nature and importance as has heretofore been stated; further, that the baptized child shall be "taught what a solemn vow, promise and profession *he* hath here made by you," and such "other things as a Christian ought to know and believe to his soul's

* See page 91.

health"—you and *he* "remembering always that Baptism doth represent unto us our profession,"—your next qualification would seem to be such sufficient knowledge on your part as will enable you to intelligently keep your vow. That is, knowledge, in its broadest Scriptural sense, as including right information respecting doctrines which you both should, and (apparently) do, believe; and again, as including an actual experience of what you teach, in those respects wherein this is a matter of experience. Do not suppose that, any one is altogether fit, in virtue of a general good character, to be a Sponsor, if after all he is ignorant of the rudiments of the Christian Faith, needing himself to be taught "which be the first principles of the oracles of GOD," "the principles of the doctrine of CHRIST, * * * repentance from dead works, faith towards GOD, the doctrine of baptism, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." And even if "for the time [that you have been learners] you ought to be [fit for] teachers," how can you be so, in your still remaining ignorance? Would you have your LORD say to you, as He said to Nicodemus, "Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest

not these things?"* If then, so much depends upon your instructions, do not attempt, unprepared, to give them. For, see, to what errors in the Faith, and the Christian life, may you not contribute! Learn, and know, therefore, WHAT you are to teach, as this has been set for you by the Church, according to Her discipline, endeavouring at least to be in advance of those under your spiritual guardianship.

But, there is a further knowledge, besides this of faith in what is set before you through the discipline of the Church, as according to GOD'S Word:—that of experience become yours, because you have acted upon the principle, "If any man will do GOD'S will, he shall know of the doctrine."† For, as we may believe that GOD will impart information to a rightly disposed will, so must an obedient faith know, by experience, the reality of truth revealed and received. And this applies to you as having yourselves been admitted to Baptism, Confirmation, and the Holy Communion. And, it is a question which you will do well to put, Whether, whilst knowledge in the first sense may suffice for your giving *information*, as Catechists, or Teachers in Sunday Schools

* Heb. v. 12; vi. 1, 2; John iii. 10.
† John vii. 17.

for example, it ought not to include the latter sense, in order to your true fitness for giving that *instruction* which is expected from you as Sponsors?

(3.) Grouping the above three Rites together, therefore,—two of them Sacraments, and all of them according to CHRIST'S Gospel,—how can you, in strictness of letter or spirit, and with effect, say to your Godchildren, that they are bound to act upon these His words, "If ye love Me, keep My commandments,"* unless you keep them also? True, no unbaptized person is admitted Sponsor, as reason there is. But then, can any say that there is any more reason for so admitting one who looks upon Baptism as only a form; or, makes light of its blessings; neither uses the privileges to which it introduces him; nor regards the obligations of the profession therein made? Let that pass, however. And now, can any tell why, being unconfirmed, and non-communicants, you should become Sponsors for those, whom you are to aid in preparing themselves for Confirmation and the Holy Communion? the one, according to the evident intention of the Church, being but a step to the other.

You might, indeed, plead to them your own pres-

* 1 John xiv. 15.

ent want of fitness here, which you are endeavouring to remedy. And this evident endeavour in you might do something to encourage them to make it likewise. Still, if you, baptized, older in years, better informed, and alledging the wish to do your duty, nevertheless make such a plea, must not they be tempted to ask, "How then can we be prepared for such solemn rites?" "If you have failed, how can we hope to succeed?" Undoubtedly, there are persons who are honestly scrupulous as to their own fitness for the LORD'S Supper, and whose cases require a delicate and forbearing consideration, until they are brought to see that, not this Sacrament, but Heaven, is the end of a Christian life; that, it is a means to such a life, in order to attaining Heaven; and that, they are the very ones who, it would seem, should scruple least to exhibit a full obedience to our Blessed LORD. And yet, such persons sometimes become Sponsors. But, will they venture upon a responsibility in others' behalf, from which they shrink, in their own? Or, would they train these up into their own defective exhibition of love for our Master? They promise to do more, as Sponsors.

The case, however, becomes much worse, if you come forward in this character, being indifferent

about Sacraments, and religious rites appointed of God, and speaking of them in a trifling, or injurious manner. You lead those, whom you have promised to guide into better things, into your own errors, to use no harsher terms. Such is the natural consequence. Are you then, prepared thus to perjure yourselves, and to bring your wards up, into a contempt for Divine Institutions? You may aver, it is true—although with but little grace as thus coming from you—that, God's law requires something more than the reception of ordinances. It does so require. It is a pious remark. But, among all the requirements of that law, ritual and moral, is it for you above all, or for any one, to say, "This should be done; that may be left undone?" Observe also that it is not merely what is thus done but its spirit, to which objection is here made. For, it is a spirit which, in the end, and if encouraged, respects nothing sacred.

It is not intended, here, to set forth, as with authority, that none but communicants shall become Sponsors. But, it is for all those who contemplate becoming, or are, such, to inquire whether, except as themselves in full communion with the Church, attached to Her doctrine and discipline, they are the

ones whom the Church would wish to answer for, and instruct, Her children, the infant "members of CHRIST?" Nor, is it denied that there may be, or are, persons, even unbaptized, who, in temper, general disposition and character, are better fitted for Sponsors than some who are but formal, or too thoughtless communicants. But, evidently, in attempting to define rules we can not avail ourselves of possible exceptions.

(4.) Once more. Having determined that you will aim to do your duty faithfully; knowing the points wherein it consists; and, as may now be assumed, being yourselves baptized, confirmed, and communicants, there only remains to add, what has thus been implied, that, having taught the principles, you should also exhibit the example, of "godly and Christian lives," "daily proceeding in all virtue and godliness of living." Look at the several particulars of "the vow, promise, and profession" which children make "by you," and there is not one thereof in regard to which you are not to take the lead, in their sight. If they are to do their duty to GOD and their neighbours, remember your own. Do not expect that they will be disposed to regularly "hear sermons," if you never, or but irregularly, hear

them ; and this, but to find fault, instead of calling attention to what is worth remembering. And, it must be a strange service indeed, largely taken as every part of our Liturgy is from Scripture, and a sermon as strange, if it has a text, in which there is nothing to commend to notice, and nothing to promote the cultivation of some Christian virtue.* Or, if you but act out your ignorance, these your scholars will not be induced thereby, or enabled, to "learn" all that "a Christian ought to know and believe." And, if your lives are neither "virtuous" nor "godly ;" if they are those of mere worldlings, immersed in this world's pleasures, follies, and even business—all which God forbid ! yet, if it be so, as it may—do not wonder if you find them apt imitators, who may outstrip you far in a sinful race. They will always have enough of evil examples about them to turn them aside from the way of holiness, through the temptations addressed to their depraved hearts. For, it is not supposed that in virtue of their Bap-

* See page 82, § 4, (3.)

"The worst speaks something good : if all want sense,
God takes a text, and preacheth patience."

And,

"He that gets patience, and the blessing which
Preachers conclude with, hath not lost his pains."

GEO. HERBERT'S *Temple. The Church Porch.*

tism, "all sinful affections" have at once "died" within them ; but, prayer is made in their behalf that, being now placed in a state of grace, all such "affections MAY die in them, and that all things belonging to the Spirit may live and grow in them."* And now, with how much more force must an ill example address itself to them, as set by you, with whom they must feel themselves bound, if they are taught to know anything about it, by a more than usually interesting and tender tie ; one, only less intimate and endearing than that which binds them to their parents.

There is still one other case to suppose, in which still less should you take advantage of present defectiveness in the Church's law, if such there be, to present yourselves to the Church, in this character ; and either compelling the Clergy to accept you therein, or to exhibit their supreme attachment for what must be right in the sight of GOD, and to take the responsibility of rejecting you, whom they could not receive with your brethren at the altar, from responding at the font. This supposable case, is where you are both guilty of immoralities, more or less, and notorious for them.

* See prayers before Baptism. Also, IXth Article.

That you may, in this, often be but examples of human weakness, instead of deliberate depravity, and so objects of pity as well as subjects for prayer, is readily granted,—and upon all such may GOD have mercy! But, that you should presume, under the circumstances, to put yourselves forward as spiritual guardians for children, to be guided by you into "all virtue and godliness of living" passes endurance. Go first, and repent; reform you; turn from your evil ways; and when you have exhibited the working of Divine Grace upon your hearts, in your lives, then, and not till then, may you venture upon undertaking the duties of this new relation towards the baptized in CHRIST.

To all, then, be it said, as you have any regard for the Church's good repute, as you value your own souls' salvation, as you value that of such as may be intrusted to your supervision and care, consider your responsibility, and meet it. For, even thus much depends upon your faithfulness, inasmuch as your unfaithfulness may contribute to the ruin of immortal souls.

5. *Qualifications of Godfathers and Godmothers, (continued.)*

2. As "Witnesses" in the case of Adults.

There is little to be added under this head, the exhortation to the "chosen witnesses" of Adults baptized, implying the same kind of fitness as has just been commended. It is supposed that, in practice, these witnesses are more generally (if not always,) communicants, than they who act as Sponsors for children. Although, it is hard to tell why this should be, since the strongest impressions of right instruction and a good example are made upon the young; whilst, as Adults answer for themselves at Baptism, so do the duties of their Witnesses ordinarily continue for a shorter space of time. For, according to the Rubric in this case, "It is expedient that every [adult] person thus baptized, should be confirmed by the Bishop, so soon after his Baptism as conveniently may be; that so he may be admitted to the Holy Communion." The duties of the Witnesses as such then cease; and previously may be considered as those only which one Christian may expect from another, the advantage of the relation between the two parties and for the time, being, that the general duty of caring for a Christian brother is,

for a special purpose, transferred from the whole body of a church or congregation to certain of its members; and is more likely, therefore, to be performed in a proper, profitable manner. And, to undertake it, with the determination to do as the Witnesses are exhorted,—the congregation having a pledge that what it owes to the newly-baptized will not be neglected,—is an act of Christian charity, than which there is none better adapted to promote "unity of spirit, in the bond of peace, and, (may we not add?)—righteousness of life."

6. *Motives to undertaking Sponsorial duties.*

1. The fact that, with a view to the bringing up of children—whose case again and finally comes under notice—"as becometh the Gospel of CHRIST,"* the Church has seen fit to recognize the Sponsorial relation and appoint its duties, should be a first motive to compliance with this part of Her discipline, in all Her members who have the prerequisite fitness for performing the duties of this relation. Even if the Church were to be regarded as only a Voluntary Association of human origin, thus much would be expected of Her members, as therefore bound by Her

* Phil. i. 27.

laws so long as these were in force. On no other principle could the well-being—not to say the being—of any Society or State be preserved, or its efficient action continued. And, the same principle, assuredly, is no less applicable in the Church of CHRIST, because its origin is held to be Divine. Nor, whilst Her members undoubtedly have the privilege of inquiring whether Her laws and institutions accord with the law of GOD, in the Gospel, need they scruple to accede at once to the present point of discipline; unless, indeed, it were contrary to GOD's law, which must be proved, not taken for granted.

2. The nature of the Sponsorial relation, together with the purpose for which it was designed, as contributing to the well-being of the Church, through the performance of the duties involved, calls up another motive for undertaking them, of no little importance. Are Her doctrines essential to salvation, as of GOD? then should they be known. Is Her discipline effectual to so good an end? then should it be enforced. Is unity of sentiment and action in her members desirable? then should there be instruction, leading to such effect. Are the most of Her members such, from childhood up? then should these have

that instruction, "so soon as they are able to learn," in order that through them the Church's unity and efficiency may be the better secured, to the attainment of the objects designed in Her very institution. And what can contribute more to Her edification, to Her members growing up into a band of brethren, of one household, harmoniously acting together for their mutual good and the salvation of all men, than the Sponsorial relation, rightly understood, and faithfully observed; as constantly increasing, moreover, the number of those who are drawn into a close, brotherly, and spiritual communion,—faith working by love?

3. Further, there is another motive which should make the members of the Church willing to enter upon this relation, in that, namely, it is an act of charity towards those, in whose favour it is undertaken. It has already been mentioned in this light, as regards the witnessing for Adults. Much more is it so to be considered in the case of answering for Infants, who can not answer for themselves at their Baptism, can not instruct or train themselves in the way of salvation, but in this respect are helpless, at the mercy of every influence, and so far exposed to

every temptation into error of faith, heart, and life. Shall they be left to themselves? Will none care for their souls? Or, shall they be trained for this world, but not for the next?

And especially is there a call for the exhibition of such charity, where parents are no more, to watch over their little ones, even if so disposed; and where they are still living, but indifferent to their own and their children's true welfare; or, in a manner destructive of the salvation of them all.

7. *Objections to becoming Sponsors, answered.*

Observing first that, generally, objections of this, or any similar, nature come with but an ill grace from members of the Church, who, in being such, are pledged to obey Her laws, yet, as objections may rise in the minds of those who would willingly and conscientiously do their duty in the present matter, could they see their way clear, somewhat may be added.

1. Thus, there is an objection to the Questions before Baptism, put to Sponsors, as answered "in the name of this child," and as further stated and explained in the Third Answer of the Catechism, to which you are referred, in connection with what fol-

lows.—Now, no Churchman, and no one professing to be a Christian, can, it is thought, object, upon any religious ground whatever, to "renouncing the devil and all his works, &c.," so far as he himself is concerned; or, to "believing in all the Articles of the Christian Faith, as contained in the Apostles' Creed;" or, if he believes in Baptism, to being "baptized in this Faith;" or, to "an obedient keeping of God's holy will and commandments, &c., all the days of his life."* Nor, therefore, can any object to a child's thus renouncing, believing, being baptized, and obeying, for himself, could he act in reference to either or all of these points, "in his own name" or person. Wherefore, as respects the principle of the thing, there can be no objection to the lawfulness and propriety of that being done for him, which he ought to do for himself were he capable of it.

2. Here, however, it may be said, that whilst such would be the child's duty were he an adult, he ought not to be bound by any vows in which he has, and can have, no voice. And yet, in worldly matters, to speak in the way of illustration, this objection is set at naught, every day. And must be, as

* See Quest. p. 10.

is evident. Otherwise, no parent, having heirs with a natural right to his estate, could control this, to buy or sell, (except during the non-age of his children,) binding them to obligations of his contracting, and to hold when they had reached their majority. Guardians could not act for their wards. Indeed, no one could be deputed to act for a principal. True, the civil law settles the course of action, here. But, on the very principle which binds a child through the action of his Sponsors.

3. Should it be urged, now, that this illustration does not come up to the point in question, because something more than worldly estates, even the spiritual interests of a child are involved, let it be answered that, this fact can not overthrow the principle illustrated, unless the child be bound to what is wrong, or deprived of some right or privilege. For an illegal action in this world's matters, done by a parent to the prejudice of a child, there is a remedy; and so, doubtless, a child could not be bound to a false Creed were he baptized ever so often. His Baptism, if in other respects valid and lawful, could serve only to the true end of Baptism and bind him to a true Creed. Is there then any thing false or

unscriptural in the Questions of the Baptismal Office and the Catechism, and their Answers, as now under notice? Observe, too, that the principle, upon which these are based, is of Divine origin. It is as old, at least, as the institution of Circumcision. Was the circumcised child, from the days of Abraham, bound to nothing when circumcised at his eighth day? Was he not bound to the terms of the Abrahamic, and then afterwards of the Mosaic, covenant? Did not the Law fix his Faith and regulate his morals? And now, should he not, might he not, have objected to the law, which, without his consent, when he was eight days old, made him keep the covenant,* taking away all supposable right to grow up as a Gentile, and thenceforward instructing him in the duties which GOD had imposed? This requires no answer. Only, it may be stated, with a reference back to the baptism of proselytes that, Jewish writers held that one may "privilege a person, though he be incapable of knowing it; but one ought not to disprivilege a person without his knowledge." And according to the Gemara, "If with a proselyte his sons and daughters be made proselytes,

* Gen. xvii. 14.

that which is done by their father redounds to their good." And this applied to children "of never so little age," whether baptized "upon the profession of the father," or "of the House of judgment."*

4. The preceding section naturally suggests a similar objection, not merely to our Creed and Formularies, but to all whatever, according to which Sponsors might pledge themselves to instruct the children for whom they answered at Baptism, the proposed principle being that children's minds should not be biassed previous to their ability to choose a faith for themselves. The principle is plausible, and perhaps pleasing, but simply and utterly inapplicable in practice. And were it not so, consider whereto it would lead; to ignorance of Creeds, of Morals, and of God. For, there is no possibility of limiting the principle without undermining it. Accordingly, the question is not between Creeds and none, but between true and false, good and bad. It must be so. For, no child can grow up in society without coming under religious and moral influences of one kind or another, from the best to the worst. And thus,

* Wall, Introd. p. 15.

we are brought back to the point from which we started; at most, to inquire into the conformity of the Baptismal Office and Catechism with the law of God as contained in His Word; and this, it has already been assumed, is settled.

5. The main objection, with which we are here concerned, now takes this shape, that, even if nothing unlawful be imposed upon a child at his Baptism as ministered according to our Formularies; and supposing that a child's mind may be lawfully biassed in a certain direction, through instruction in the Catechism as agreeing with the Word of God; yet, since there is no absolute certainty as to what said child will actually do, in the course of time, Sponsors ought not to pledge "in his name" that he will renounce, as doing it now, or that he will believe and will obey. Now, one would suppose it a sufficient answer to this to say, that Sponsors promise only what the child ought to promise; that the child is taught in the Catechism what is the intended effect of said promise, viz.: "that he should renounce," "should believe," "should keep," &c.; is taught to "think" that he is "bound to believe, and to do as they (the Sponsors) have

promised for him."* Just as, in effect, a guardian says that his ward *shall*, after his majority, ratify all that the guardian has done or pledged. In which case, should the ward, no longer under guardianship, refuse such ratification, the civil law, by fine or other process of penalty, would compel him to his duty; indeed, to continue in the performance of that upon which he has already entered through his guardian acting for him, it being taken for granted, moreover, from the outset, that he is a reasonable and equitable being, willing to do what is right and legal in the premises. The cases, then, are strictly parallel, except that there is no other law compelling baptized children to keep their Sponsors' pledge, (which is none the less their own because taken "in their name,") than one of a moral force and nature, eventuating in eternal punishment for voluntary failure. Nor do Sponsors vow or promise, as "sureties," respecting what, children "when they come to age are themselves bound to perform,"† more than is promised by guardians for their wards. Only, the subject matter of the promise is different, being of a religious and spiritual, not of a worldly

* Quest. Pub. Bap. of Infants. Quest. 3, Catechism, pp. 10, 27.
† Catechism, Quest. 20, Ans.

and civil nature, whilst there need be no more hesitation to make the pledges in advance which are required, in the one case than in the other. Indeed, the advantage is here believed to be on the side of Sponsors. For, they act under Divine sanction. The obligations entered into at Baptism are of Divine origin, since they are set forth by the law which points out the way of eternal life. It is the way of Truth into which the child is introduced. He has thus made a "beginning" whereof GOD approves; has, at the least, "been called into a state of salvation,"* for attaining the full purposes of which GOD'S SPIRIT, we may be well assured, is promised, and accordingly will be afforded. And, further, that the Baptismal vows are taken in no spirit of presumptuous self-confidence appears from this, that, whilst there is an absolute, unconditional renunciation of the devil, the world, and the flesh, yet the pledge is "by GOD'S help, to *endeavour* not to follow nor be led by them."† So, the promise to obey, again, is "by GOD'S help." At the same time, when the baptized come to be taught, and to teach them is a duty, they are taught to "think themselves

* Cat. Quest. 4, Ans. page 27.

† Quest. Pub. Bap. of Infants, page 10.

bound to believe and to do as their Sponsors promised for them;" to say that they "will, by GOD'S help;" to "thank Him for calling them into this state of salvation;" and to "pray that He would give them His grace that they may continue in the same unto their lives' end."*

And now, whilst the baptized are undoubtedly bound by the vows and promises in their names, the Sponsors themselves are bound only to the duty of giving such instruction and using such efforts as are calculated, and therefore appointed, to contribute to the keeping of the above vows and promises. Wherefore, then, need any hesitate to act in the Sponsorial capacity, as presented to view in the Baptismal Office and the Catechism, merely because children *may* not, perhaps, keep their vows? Is this our faith in the efficacious working of GOD'S SPIRIT; in His Institutions; in the evidently Scriptural promise that the religious training of the young shall be blessed? Nor say, that many children of pious parents do not live in accordance with the pious care that has been bestowed upon them. "Let GOD be true, and every man a liar,"†

* Catechism, Quest. 4, Ans.
† Rom. iii. 4.

and rather suppose some defect and omission in this case, than assume that His word can fail. For, it is against Him that you are thus arguing. Meanwhile, it is enough for you, as Sponsors, to be faithful and confidently to leave the results to Him, believing that these, after all allowances made for the perversity of the human heart, will be such as to encourage your present entering into a relation so holy, and upon duties so important.

6. Some have objected, again, to undertaking for children, upon the supposition that this involved some provision for their temporal support. This objection, connected as it may be with an occasional expectation in parents of gifts from Sponsors to their children, is without foundation. And it is enough that any are found willing to undertake this office. It is their best gift. Still, there is one case, that of the poor orphan, in which something should be done for the body as well as the soul. But, this double duty does not rest upon Sponsors, as such. They can often do something, as others can, individually, for such support of the young "member of CHRIST" as will withdraw him from temptation, through his necessities. Nevertheless, this belongs to the

Church ; and, is only mentioned in this connection, for the purpose of adding one more voice to an already swelling note of appeal to all those Churchmen who have not hitherto helped Her on, as they might and should have done, in this Her work. Where are Her Houses of Refuge, Her Asylums, and Her Parish Schools ? And where, the means of establishing and supporting them ?

7. Another objection there is, which may deter some from becoming Sponsors. And, whilst it ought to have come from the thoughtless, formal, fashionable Sponsor, with such an effect, it may have weight with those who, being more impressed with a sense of the duties involved, ought to be among the last to raise it, or to be influenced by it. Namely, that there are involved so much care, trouble and responsibility. It is so. The fact must not be denied, even to add but one to the list of Sponsors, as supposing it otherwise. But, what an objection is this ! As well object at once to being a Christian. The way in which he has to walk is "straight" and "narrow." It abounds in difficulties, is surrounded by dangers, compels him to care, leads him under many a responsibility, to where he will

be held strictly accountable at last. Would you, therefore, deny your Master, and the faith, or willingly give up all hope of Heaven? No? And shall, then, any such reason—or any reason as interfering with a duty—withhold you from undertaking a labour of love, in behalf of the little ones of CHRIST'S fold, for their good, not excluding your own?

8. Finally, there is here remembered but one other objection to the Sponsorial system, that, Sponsors and their office of instructing the baptized are made a substitute for GOD'S SPIRIT. How unreasonable and how unwarranted such a supposition or assertion is, an examination of our Formularies touching the matter in hand must clearly show. Sponsors are to do the work set for them, but are in no wise regarded as substitutes for the SPIRIT of GOD. Nor is the moral influence of their office, or of its instructions, to be considered as instead of the influences of Divine Grace, acting directly, or through appointed instrumentalities, upon Its subjects.

However, to illustrate. The "baptized into JESUS CHRIST"—says St. Paul—are "planted together in the likeness of His death," that they may be so

"also in the likeness of His resurrection," to the end that they "should not serve sin" but "walk in newness of life." Does any one suppose that, when a tree newly planted is staked and so fastened, the stakes are the life of the tree, or instead of the soil in which it stands, or of the rains, and air, and light, and heat of Heaven? They hold it fast until firmly rooted, and then are taken away.—Again, Baptism may be likened to grafting. The ingrafted branch is secured firmly upon the stock into which it is inserted, and protected against whatsoever might hinder its life.* Are these guards the life? And yet, would the new branch be likely to stand and live, becoming incorporated as part of the tree upon which it stands, were it only inserted? Once more. Look at a spire of corn as it springs up from the ground until the full ear is ripened. The ear does not grow up out of the stock, unprotected. The husk surrounds, and grows with, it. Remove the husk, and the ear dies, or will not become perfect. Leave it until the ripened ear no longer needs it, and it is taken away, becoming food for cattle, but the corn for man.

So, with Sponsors in like wise. They are mere

* Rom. vi. 3-6; xi. 16-24.

instruments in the hand of God.—They guard the young "member of Christ," that it may stand firm, take root, and flourish, "like a tree planted by the rivers of water."*—They protect it in its place, until it becomes so incorporated with the Tree—the True Vine†—into which it has been grafted, as that it can stand, without their help.—They serve the purpose appointed them while the ear is growing, growing themselves the while, and then are removed. Of this nature is the design of their present relation to the baptized, of their nurturing care, instruction, and training, until when these their children or wards shall renew and confirm the vows, once taken by them, through others acting in their names.

Will, then, any say that Sponsors are considered substitutes for God's Spirit, to any extent or in any manner, when, after rehearsing the Commandments, (in keeping of which, as including the fear of God, is the whole duty of man,) every baptized child is taught, "Know this, that thou art not able to do these things of thyself, nor to walk in the commandments of God and to serve Him, without His special grace, which thou must learn at all times to call for

* Ps. i. 3.
† Rom. xi. 16-24; John xv. 1.

by diligent prayer?"* As well plant your tree upon a rock, and though you stake it fast, or in a good soil, yet taking away all moisture, and air, and light, and heat, and expect it to live; or, your graft upon a dead tree, or your corn in a barren ground! Nay, here also is it true, that "Paul plants and Apollos waters, but God gives the increase."†

8. *Conclusion.*

In thus committing the present Manual to the members of the Church for their examination, and for its perusal and use for such as are, or contemplate becoming, Sponsors, every other intention than that of, in some measure, aiding all such in their work of charity, is disclaimed. That, every thing possible to be said has been thus written; or that, the preceding pages contain all, in due measure, which may naturally fall within their scope, is neither claimed nor supposed. Or, should it be thought that, more than necessary space has been given to the subject of Baptism, let it be answered that somewhat of this nature seemed necessary to

* Cat. Quest. 12; Eccles. xii. 13.
† 1 Cor. iii. 6.

the contemplated design,—to give a continuous view of the Sponsorial office in connection with the covenant of grace, not exclusively but chiefly, as exhibited in the Church of the New Dispensation. In view, therefore, of this connection as it appears more especially in our Formularies, the attempt has been made to present this office or relation to notice as, following the Book of Common Prayer, we have, or should have, it presented to us, in practice; to suggest points of responsibility incurred by those who act in it; and, through such suggestions, to contribute to a studious and faithful undertaking of its duties.

Be not discouraged, however, by any thought of trouble, or care, or even of the great responsibility attending it. The work is not yours, nor yours the production of results. You must expect here, likewise, to meet with many obstacles in your way, raised by imperfections in yourselves and in the young. But, where will you not find them in the course of your pilgrimage, which is also a warfare? And, where can you hope to find obstacles, fewer in number, less difficult to overcome, than in the case and care of those, concerning all of whom, CHRIST Himself hath said, "of such is the kingdom of

God;"* whom, as *little children*, He once blessed, hath blessed even now, and will continue to bless? Begin then. Go on. With a willingness to devote time, and study, and effort, as circumstances may require, to this noble and charitable work of preparing souls for Heaven. In many respects, it is admitted, the time might be more agreeably employed, although not more profitably, if "by teaching we learn." And what study more noble than that of characters yet unformed, so that, their predispositions, their peculiarities, and their needs being seen, they may be formed after "the mind of Christ,"† as this is manifested in the written Word through His teaching and example therein described? Or, what effort is there that you should be more willing to make than this, so praiseworthy as to its object, so promising of success, so clearly acceptable to God, and so likely to be rewarded? For, "they that be wise [or, *teachers*,] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars, for ever and ever." Only, remember to seek for yourselves that "grace" which "is sufficient for you," as it is necessary for all the

* Mark x. 14; Luke xviii. 16.
† 1 Cor. ii. 16.

children of God. Then, persevere, knowing Who hath said, "They that seek Me early shall find Me," and, "him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."*

* Daniel xii. 3; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Prov. viii. 17; John vi. 37.

Collects.

Such as may be appropriately used by Sponsors in their own behalf, and for, as well as by, children for whom they answered at Baptism. Indeed, most of the Collects may be thus adapted, in the manner following.

Blessed Lord, Who hath caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning; grant that *we* [with *this child*] may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of Thy holy Word, *we* may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ.

[Second Sunday in Advent.

Almighty God, Who hast given us Thy only-begotten Son to take our nature upon Him, and ** to be born of a pure Virgin; grant that *we* [*this child*] being regenerate, and made Thy *children* by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by Thy Holy Spirit, through the Same, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the same Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

[Nativity of our Lord.

O Almighty God, Who out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast ordained strength, and madest infants to glorify Thee by their deaths; mortify and kill all vices in *us*, and so strengthen us by Thy grace, that by the innocency of *our lives* and constancy of *our* faith even unto death, *we* may glorify Thy holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Holy Innocents' Day.

Almighty God, Who madest Thy Blessed Son to be circumcised and obedient to the law for man; grant *us* [*this child*] the true circumcision of the Spirit, our hearts [*his heart*] and all *our* [*his*] members being mortified from all worldly and carnal lust, *we* [*he*] may in all things obey Thy blessed will, through the Same, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

[The Circumcision of Christ.

O God, Who, through the preaching of the blessed Apostle Saint Paul, hast caused the light of the Gospel to shine throughout the world; grant, *we* beseech Thee, that *we*, having his wonderful conversion in remembrance, may show forth *our* thankfulness unto Thee for the same, by following the holy doctrine which he taught, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Conversion of St. Paul.

Almighty and everliving God, *we* humbly beseech Thy Divine Majesty, that as Thy only-begotten Son was presented in the Temple in substance of our flesh, so *we* may be presented unto Thee with [*a*] pure and clean hearts, by the Same, Thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Presentation.

O Lord God, Who seest that *we* put not *our* trust in any thing that *we do;* mercifully grant that by Thy power *we* may be defended against all adversity, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Sexagesima Sunday.

Almighty and everlasting God, Who hatest nothing that Thou hast made, and dost forgive the sins of all those who are penitent; create and make in *us* new and contrite hearts, that *we*, worthily lamenting *our* sins and acknowledging *our* wretchedness, may obtain of Thee, the God of all mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

[Ash-Wednesday.

GRANT, O LORD, that as *we are* baptized into the death of Thy Blessed Son our Saviour JESUS CHRIST, so by continual mortifying *our* corrupt affections, *we* may be buried with Him; and that through the grave and gate of death *we* may pass to *our* joyful resurrection, for His merits, Who died and was buried, and rose again for us, Thy Son JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

[Easter-Even.

ALMIGHTY GOD, Who through Thine only-begotten Son JESUS CHRIST hast overcome death and opened unto us the gate of everlasting life; *we* humbly beseech Thee, that as, by Thy special grace preventing *us*, Thou dost put into *our* minds good desires; so by Thy continual help *we* may bring the same to good effect, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the HOLY GHOST, ever one GOD, world without end.

[Easter-Day.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, Who alone canst order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men; grant unto *Thy people*, that *they* may love the thing which Thou commandest, and desire that which Thou dost promise; that so, among the sundry and manifold changes of the world, *our* hearts may surely there be fixed, where true joys are to be found, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

[Fourth Sunday after Easter.

O GOD, Who *** didst teach the hearts of Thy faithful people, by sending to them the light of Thy HOLY SPIRIT; grant *us* by the same SPIRIT to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in His holy comfort, through the merits of JESUS CHRIST our Saviour, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee, in the unity of the same SPIRIT, one GOD, world without end.

[Whit-Sunday.

LORD of all power and might, Who art the Author and Giver of all good things, graft in *our* hearts the love of Thy Name, increase in *us* true religion, nourish *us* with all goodness, and of Thy great mercy keep *us* in the same, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

[Seventh Sunday after Trinity.

LORD, *we* pray Thee, that Thy grace may always prevent and follow *us;* and make *us* continually to be given to all good works, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

[Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, Who hast built Thy Church upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, JESUS CHRIST Himself being the head corner-stone; grant us so to be joined together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be made an holy temple acceptable unto Thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

[SS. Simon and Jude, Apostles.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, Who hast knit together Thine elect in one communion and fellowship, in the mystical body of Thy Son, CHRIST our LORD; grant *us* grace so to follow Thy blessed Saints in all virtue and all godliness of living, that *we* may come to those unspeakable joys, which Thou hast prepared for those who unfeignedly love Thee, through JESUS CHRIST our LORD.

[All Saints' Day.

"The LORD bless *us* and keep *us:* The LORD make His face to shine upon *us*, and be gracious unto *us:* The LORD lift up His countenance upon *us*, and give *us* peace, both now and evermore. *Amen.*"

THE END.

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not speak at large. The First Part, published some two or three years ago, made its mark; and the Second Part, while it adds more than double to the fullness and richness of the whole, abates nothing from the interest or force of argument. Nor is there any flagging in that rapid, earnest, glowing style with which the author pours out the whole river of his thoughts, feelings, self-conflicts, convictions, and final triumphs; nor any flinching in carrying out to the full those clear and irrefragable conclusions, from which no serious, intelligent, and unbiased mind can escape. Page after page rolls freely on, as if the author were himself talking to the reader; as if his very voice could be heard, rising and falling with the interwoven tissue of argument, illustration, warning, entreaty, and tender consideration for ignorance and prejudices. At one time, he marches straight at the adversary, meets him face to face, gives him choice of his own weapons, and of time, place and circumstance: then fights him a pitched battle, unmasking all his specious defences, striking home at once, and following up with blow on blow redoubled, until the enemy is not only defeated but annihilated. At another, he gently binds him about with cords that seem slender and weak at the first, but one after another they follow, growing thicker and more numerous, they wind around and around, until the opponent finds himself at length, and almost imperceptibly, bound hand and foot, and compelled to surrender at discretion. Not in vain has the gifted author suffered for years in the struggle, through which he has returned unto the Church from which his ancestors, in an evil day, went out. If his own heart had not been so deeply wrung, he would never have known how to reach so surely the hearts of those who, though now what he was once, are yet alarmed by the downward tendency of every thing around them, and are beginning to search for 'a more excellent way.' The learned and accurate theologian might prefer a treatise more condensed and more technical; but for the many, we are satisfied that this is by far the best work on the controversy with Presbyterians (including questions fundamental to all Protestant sects) that has ever yet been written. It will be read by thousands and tens of thousands, to whom other books on the same subject would seem too dry to be either read or inwardly digested. The First Part, incomplete as it was, has brought numbers into the Church. Now that the whole is out, we shall find our harvest but begun. The work, as a popular argument for the Church, cannot be fairly answered; nor do we believe that an answer will be attempted." [*The Church Journal.*

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